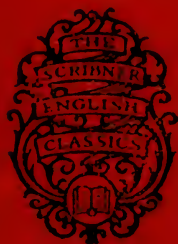


SHAKESPEARE'S
THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

—
SYKES

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The Scribner English Classics

EDITED BY

FREDERICK H. SYKES, PH.D.

LATE PRESIDENT CONNECTICUT COLLEGE FOR WOMEN

THE PLAYS OF SHAKESPEARE
THE MERCHANT OF VENICE



William Shakespeare
From the Droeshout portrait

William Shakespeare
The Scribner English Classics

THE PLAYS OF SHAKESPEARE

THE COMEDY OF THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

EDITED WITH INTRODUCTION

BY

FREDERICK HENRY SYKES, PH.D.

AND NOTES

BY

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PREFATORY NOTES

I

THE edition of *The Merchant of Venice* here presented follows the plan of the Shakespeare plays that have already been issued in the Scribner English Classics. It aims to give in brief compass the working material needed by the careful student of the play.

This material includes a trustworthy text. In the case of *The Merchant of Venice* this is offered by the Second Quarto edition, 1600, now established as the earliest edition of the play and the basis both of the pseudo First Quarto and the First Folio versions. The present text follows the Second Quarto, retaining the long lines that have been needlessly cut up in many editions. Spelling and punctuation are modernized, and amended readings universally accepted are incorporated.

The main phases of the study of the play are suggested in the Introduction. *The Merchant of Venice* has implicit in it much material of culture history — the Venetian State, the Renaissance, relations of Christian and Jew, and the question of usury. The comprehension of the play and appreciation of civilization are increased if we can take on the environment of the age in which it was written and to which it was primarily addressed.

Still "the play's the thing." A drama has a form through which its human story is re-created. The student will add to his interest in the story by noting how and to what extent each scene and character contributes to the evolution of the plot. This is especially profitable with *The Merchant of Venice*, as it has dramatic values that have kept it on the stage, offering in all ages since its composition scope for the genius of the greatest actors. The characters themselves are significant, and their motives, sentiments, and actions are a constant elucidation of human nature. As the play

drives on from its inherent forces, the appreciation of these is not only good dramatic study but a humanizing influence, which is Shakespeare's peculiar gift to the student. If the play, or parts of it, can be given dramatic presentation, the study of the play then takes on the vital life of the world of art for which Shakespeare designed it.

The terms of drama used in this edition follow the definitions given in the Appendix to *Julius Cæsar* in this series.

The Notes are especially devoted to the elucidation of the text, the careful study of which not only conduces to the understanding of the play but yields a worth-while by-product of knowledge of Elizabethan diction, ideas, and social life. The work of the great editors has been carefully collated and whatever a fresh survey has yielded of appropriate material has been incorporated.

CAMBRIDGE, MASS., September 27, 1917.

II

The death on October 13, 1917, of Dr. Frederick Henry Sykes, chief editor of the Scribner English Classics, is accountable for two names on the title page of this volume and for this second prefatory note.

I was associated with Dr. Sykes in the preparation of *Julius Cæsar* and *Macbeth* for this series and, though without any expectation whatever of taking active part in that of *The Merchant of Venice*, I had discussed the play with him and had seen most of the Introduction in manuscript.

When, therefore, the very sudden ending to this and many other activities came, it seemed fitting that I should complete the work by writing the notes, which Dr. Sykes had not touched. This I have done, in order that so interesting a piece of constructive criticism as the Introduction may be preserved among the all too scanty published records of a scholarship the range and finish of which were best known to those who had the opportunity of coming into close contact with it and of profiting by it.

Among them I gratefully count myself, and, deeply as I feel the responsibility of the work of annotation, I am no less deeply conscious of grave satisfaction that I may so close many years of friendship and scholarly association.

LIZETTE ANDREWS FISHER.

NEW YORK, June 1, 1919.

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INTRODUCTION

I — ENVIRONMENT OF THE ACTION

I — VENICE OF THE RENAISSANCE

The incidents in the eventful history of *The Merchant of Venice* belong to Venice and to the second quarter of the sixteenth century. It was a romantic time and setting befitting a romantic story.

The Renaissance. The period of human history known as the Renaissance was in Italy a great era in the development of humanity. The increasing wealth of Italy, the establishment of prosperous commonwealths and states, the resurrection and absorption of the ancient literatures of Greece and Rome, freed and stirred men to realize a high and liberal civilization. The refinements of social life, the culture and ideals of humanity, beauty in life, in nature, in all works of brain or hand, were supremely valued and consciously sought. The Portia of our play is, for instance, a figure representative of the status, charm, and culture of noblewomen in the Renaissance.

Venice as an Empire. The Venice of our drama we must think of as both a city and an empire — a city of a hundred and fifty thousand people, but a world power by reason of her fleets, her commerce, and her dominion. The history of Venice was illustrious. A thousand years had seen the slow transformation of fisher villages on the mud banks and marshy islands of the Adriatic to a mercantile-marine state, whose sway, centring in Rialto, extended, before her, over the Adriatic, the Ægean, Crete, Cyprus, and, for a time, Constantinople; and, behind her, Padua, Vicenza, Verona, Friuli, to the Alps. The Venetians had founded their empire on the exploitation of the trade of Western Europe with the

Orient, for which, by reason of her geographical situation, Venice was the natural port. They maintained a monopoly of that trade by controlling, through conquest, settlement, and war-ships (sea-power), the trade routes to Constantinople and the Black Sea, to the Levant and India; their merchant ships (argosies) were "scattered abroad" in every sea; their agents were in every great port; and they kept access open to Venice from Europe by controlling the communication by river and road with northern Italy and the passes of the Alps.

In government Venice was an oligarchy of hereditary aristocrats. The form of government was that of a republic, but the mass of the Venetians were without franchise and were ineligible for public office. The men of the old prominent families constituted (1) the Great Council. (In 1340 there were 1212 members.) This was the body of electors, legislating on home and foreign affairs, controlling finance. It chose the electors of the (2) Doge (Venetian for Ital. *duca*, Lat. *dux*), who was the nominal head for life of the Republic and presided at all meetings of all councils. It chose (3) the Senate of sixty, subsequently one hundred and twenty, members, to direct great affairs of state policy, of peace and war. The six quarters of the city elected the six members of (4) the Lesser Council, who supervised all the acts of the Doge. The supreme judiciary was (5) the Council of Forty, who also had charge of the Mint and Arsenal. To these were added (6) the Council of Ten, for extraordinary criminal and political affairs, and (7) the College, or cabinet, made up of the seven executive heads of the state departments. It was a constitution that eliminated the tyranny of an hereditary prince and used in government the joint action of constituted groups of leading citizens. It was a constitution that "for its stability and efficiency became the admiration of every statesman of Europe." (Okey.)

In Shakespeare's day Venice as a world power had ceased to exist. A long and wearing warfare with Genoa for the trade of the East; a long-enduring and losing struggle with the growing empire of the Turk, with whom her Eastern trade routes brought her into disastrous conflict; above all, the dis-

covery of a new route to India by way of the Cape of Good Hope (1486 and 1497-8), which broke her trade monopoly in favor of the new commercial nations — Portuguese, Dutch, English; the alignment of the powers of Europe, the Papal States, Spain, France, Germany, Austria-Hungary, against her land power in the League of Cambray; — because of these things her power had declined. She lost trade and she lost dominion — Constantinople (1453) and Cyprus' (1571) to the Turk; and was worn out with warfare. But her day waned with many splendors. She led in geographical knowledge and map-making, and, through the University of Padua which she controlled, in science (physics, anatomy, medicine); she was still the chief mart of Italy; her ships were still prominent in the carrying trade; she had great revenues from customs, exchange, and her salt monopoly. Her wonderful prestige remained, the beauty and glamour of Venice "throned on her hundred isles."

The City of Venice. As a city, Venice was the most romantic of cities of Europe. As early as 809 the Venetians had established their stronghold in the little group of islands called Rialto (*rivo alto*, high bank), in the lagoon of Venice. There they built, channelled, and fortified, with unique devotion to the state. There what came to be called the city of Venice arose, of unequalled splendor. The name Rialto still continued to signify the commercial quarter. There in the goodly colonnaded square the merchants most did congregate, meeting twice daily. At one end of the square was the hunchback figure (Ital. *gobbo*) of stone supporting the standing-place from which the laws of Venice were proclaimed. Near by was San Giacomo, the oldest church in Venice. Near by, also, were the landing-places of the regular ferries to the mainland, to Chioggia and Padua. On the north side of Rialto the way passed over the great bridge (changed from wood to stone, 1588-1592) that spanned the Great Canal; thence it led to the two chief architectural glories of Venice, the Ducal Palace and the Cathedral of St. Mark.

Venice had risen like Aphrodite from the waves, and the mystery of ocean hung round her. Palaces adorned with the

richest Gothic detail or designed with the exuberant art of the Venetian Renaissance lined her canals. St. Mark's united Gothic and Byzantine genius and was an amethystine marvel of color. Gorgeous mosaics and fabrics of the East decorated her buildings. Their walls were adorned with the paintings of Giorgione, Titian, the Bellinis, Tintoretto, Veronese, Carpaccio.

In the height of the Renaissance men turned to Venice for her grandiose architecture, for her most glorious group of painters, for the best printers (Aldus), whose editions of the classics spread through Europe, for her religious and civil liberty. Strangers found in Venice, "the revel of the world, the masque of Italy," a unique expression of the joy of life.

Elizabethan Impressions of Venice. The Elizabethans knew Venice well, as a city rivalling their own London. Impressions of Venice were fully recorded in the literature of England accessible to the Elizabethans; such as, William Thomas's *History of Italy*, 1549; *Hakluyt's Principal Navigations, Voyages and Discoveries of the English Nation*, 1589, and, though the translation is later than our play, Lewkenor's version (1599), with additions, of Contarini's *Commonwealth and Government of Venice*. To these must be added the impressions of travelled Englishmen, of English students in Italian universities, especially the university of Padua, references in contemporary drama and story, especially such as were drawn from the Renaissance literature of Italy. From these it is possible to recover the point of view of the Elizabethans with respect to the famous city and to confirm the impression implicit in *The Merchant of Venice*.

These records speak of Venice as Queen of the Sea; of her marvellous situation, built on piles, on the islands of the Adriatic; a city full of people, rich in treasure and buildings, with two hundred palaces fit to lodge any king; of her ocean-streets, the great canal and innumerable lesser channels, full of gondolas to pass up and down the city or serve as ferries (*traghetti*) across the canals, of her merchandise brought from all realms and countries, both by land and sea; of her cosmopolitan character — the concourse of strange people,

drawn even from the remotest nations, as if Venice were a general market to the whole world; of her empire over land and sea; of her government, as a free commonwealth. Men spoke with wonder of the religious and civil liberty of Venice: "*If thou be a Jew, or Turk, or believest in the devil — thou art free from all controlment. . . . So (provided) thou offend no man privately, no man shall offend thee: which is one principal cause that draweth strangers thither.*" — T. Nash. Her spell was upon all. "To have swum in a gondola" was for Englishmen synonymous with travel (*As You Like It*, IV, i, 38); Spenser felt her glamour, apostrophizing her as

"Fair Venice, flower of the world's last delight."

As a scene for a play no setting could be more romantic or more fascinating.

. II — CHRISTIAN AND JEW

Christendom and the Jews. The interpretation of *The Merchant of Venice* is conditioned not only by the Elizabethan point of view as respects Venice but also by the older attitude of Christendom towards the Jews. The play in many situations records the antipathies of race, religion, and social status which are now happily extinct in most parts of the world.

The essential business of the mediæval Jews was money-lending — a trade long forbidden by the Christian Church to its own members. Their precarious status in Christendom naturally led them to hold property in a form easiest to carry or to hide — gold and jewels. Held together by the community of race, religion, and language, the Jews dispersed throughout Europe had unconsciously constituted a system of international banking. Their prime occupation was created by the very restrictions put on their existence in Christendom: in Germany they could not hold land; throughout Europe the crafts guilds were for the most part closed to them. This isolation due to a difference of race and religion told against them in law and social life, and the money-lender is never loved. The religious passions stirred up by the Crusades reacted against the Jews; they had put Christ

to death and were getting the Christian's money. Their ceremonial of the Passover bred, in the mind of the mob, strange myths of ritual murder (the Hugh of Lincoln story, for example, c. 1400; see also the *Prioress's Tale* in Chaucer). All Christendom through the Middle Ages and the Renaissance held the attitude to the Jews that to-day lingers only in some parts of Russia. Every nation shows a uniform record of persecution, extortion, massacre, expulsion. Nevertheless Jews lived on everywhere, but lived as a pariah race, outside the pale of law and even humanity, dependent on the favor of the mob, and, when protected at all, on the dangerous favor of the crown. By order of Innocent III (1198-1216) they were obliged to wear "the badge of all their tribe." On the Continent this was usually square or round, of saffron-yellow or some other color, on the hat or mantle. In England the badge was established by law (1222) as a woolen strip on the breast, of a different color to the dress, four fingers long and two broad (Graetz, *History of the Jews*, III, 527-531). Under Edward I the law required the badge to be yellow.

Usually, too, the Jews had to live in assigned, restricted quarters, known as the Ghetto (Italian) or Jewry (English). From 1500 their residence in the Ghetto was mandatory under stringent church law. The Ghetto in Venice (the first dates from 1516) was on the site of the foundries of the arsenal, between the churches of San Geremia and San Girolamo, up the east bank of the Cannareggio. It was surrounded by a high wall. The Jews were shut in from sunset to sunrise, and also on certain feasts of the Christian calendar. (Molmenti, *Venice*, I, i, 195.)

Throughout all, the Jews made it their rule to conform to the laws of the country in which they lived, and retained pure their home life, their blood, and their religion. In Spain and Portugal at one great period of freedom, they grew eminent in culture, scientific knowledge, and statesmanship.

The Jews in England. In England the Jews appear as the first money-lenders. The persecution of the Jews in England began as a part of the obsession of the Crusades.

The custom of ill-treatment once established, it was continued — by needy kings who kept the Jews dependent on them as a handy prey, by people who could rid themselves of debt and imaginary terrors by pillage and massacre. The Jews were massacred under Richard I, plundered under John (see Scott's *Ivanhoe*), fined under Henry III; their synagogues in London were destroyed by the Church (1285); under Edward I the Jews were forbidden to lend money, hundreds were hanged, and the great mass, about fifteen thousand, banished (1290). A few contrived to remain or to return.

About the time that *The Merchant of Venice* was written, it was said that "a store of Jews we have in England — a few in court; many in the City (London), more in the country." (Quoted by S. Lee, *Gentleman's Magazine*, February, 1880; in Furness, Var., 395.) The most famous Jew "in the court of Queen Elizabeth" was Roderigo Lopez, a Spanish Jew inheriting the scientific skill of his branch of the race, who was physician to Queen Elizabeth. Lopez was drawn into a Spanish plot against Antonio Perez, who aimed to establish himself on the throne of Portugal. This plot developed into another Spanish plot against Queen Elizabeth. The two plots were divulged; Lopez, threatened with the rack, confessed; he was tried for treason, and though probably innocent of real complicity in the conspiracy against Elizabeth, was found guilty by the jury, and hanged at Tyburn, May, 1594. The Earl of Essex led the prosecution of Lopez; the Earl of Southampton was Essex's friend and Shakespeare's patron. Shakespeare's knowledge of all these events and the popular excitement that attended them may be taken as assured. And *The Merchant of Venice* (Frederick Hawkins, *Theatre*, November, 1879) in the Trial Scene has echoes of this affair.

III — THE QUESTION OF MONEY-LENDING

Money-lending. The Elizabethans came to a play like *The Merchant of Venice* with a strong traditional antipathy to the money-lender. The money-lender, because of the

cruelty that so frequently characterized the type, had been held up to scorn by the poets from Hesiod down. In ancient Greece bankruptcy would be followed by the slavery of the debtor. In Rome the money-lenders brought about the destruction of the free farmers of the state: Cato classed together the murderer and the usurer. Dante found a place for usurers in the sixth circle of Inferno. The evils of money-lending were so well known to antiquity that the mediæval Church, with the Jewish law as authority (Deuteronomy, xxiii, 19 f.), prohibited the practice of it by canon law. In England the taking of interest was made illegal in 1235, though subsequent acts modified the law to permit the taking of interest but not of usury (excessive interest).

In spite of the teaching of the Church, the economic advantage that attends the lending of money at interest was gradually recognized. Indeed the Lombards, including the Venetians, with their well-established independence in religious affairs, held that Christians could be money-lenders. Hence the vogue of the arms of Lombardy as the pawnbroker's sign. English Christians gradually stood the odium and took interest, and under the guise of "damages" the law gradually supported them. The taking of interest was openly legalized in 1516, the maximum legal rate being ten per cent (J. Noorthouck), and this continued to be the maximum legal rate through the Elizabethan period. Bacon, who represents the transition to modern usage, takes the ground, in his essay on usury, that while men's hearts are bad there will be borrowing and lending for interest; he advocated that there should be a general rate of five per cent, and that only those could exact a higher rate who were specially licensed.

The opposition of the Christian Church throughout the Middle Ages gave the Jews a practical monopoly of money-lending. If Deuteronomy forbade usury to a "brother" it said nothing about lending to a Gentile. It was as money-lenders that the Jews incurred the hatred and persecution that mark their history in Christendom. Shylock embodies in a typical figure the popular conception of the Jewish money-lender.

II — THE THEME OF "THE MERCHANT OF VENICE"

The Question of Money. The title *The Merchant of Venice* suggests a play that concerns itself in a significant way with wealth. And no other play of Shakespeare's refers to money with anything like the frequency that this play does. Property in an elementary form means "that which is mine own," the materials and tools possessed that make living possible. In a developed society both the materials of living and living itself become highly complex. The wealthy command the services of others in business and in household establishments; they possess the means of culture and the enjoyment of the arts. From the rights of property arise credit, borrowing and lending, bonds and penalties, testaments and dowries. Property is not only a chief goal of human effort but a prolific source of human conflict. An ever-increasing mass of law strives to define the rights of property and the obligations of contract. In such a field there is a mine of dramatic material.

That the story of life presented in *The Merchant of Venice* touches in manifold ways the question of money is beyond doubt. The play opens with a picturesque vision of the wealth of the Venetian merchant, scattered in argosies on all routes of trade, yet a precarious wealth, exposed to all the vicissitudes of weather, navigation, piracy. The scene changes to a glimpse of the heiress of landed property, station, and culture, with the accompaniments of attendants, musicians, host of suitors. The scene changes again to the wealth of the Venetian money-lender — his loans, with the accompaniments of interest, bonds, forfeits, bankruptcy, debtors' prison, courts of justice. A prodigal noble hopes to achieve love and money by marriage with a great heiress, but he must have money to prosecute his suit successfully. We see the merchant using his credit to borrow the money his noble kinsman needs from a Jewish money-lender, on dangerous terms, a three-months' bond, with the forfeit of a pound of flesh. So the plot is woven; and so it continues — the caskets

of gold, silver, lead; the betrothal speech of Portia; the flight of Jessica with gold and jewels; the lamentations of Shylock; the arrest and trial of the delinquent debtor. Without doubt, property has its place in the texture of the play.

The Theme of Love. The love motive is equally present — love in a broad sense — sex passion, family ties, friendship, social helpfulness, even love of money for itself, avarice, the root of all the evil force in the play. The story of Bassanio and Portia and the minor stories of Gratiano and Nerissa, Lorenzo and Jessica, Morocco, Arragon, have the love themes. The helpful actions of the play have their motive in love; the hurtful actions have their source in avarice thwarted, which turns to hatred and revenge.

The two motives of money and love are constantly associated throughout the play, though no romanticist would admit that there is any inherent connection between the two. The lover needs money to express and attain his desire. The friend provides the money out of friendship; Shylock pretends to lend it out of kindness. The lady with many wooers is an heiress; at a supreme moment she shows how love regards wealth in relation to the man who has "rightly loved." With one character wealth is a means to express love, with another it is an end in itself, so abused that home life becomes "hell," and man is changed to the semblance of a jungle beast.

Life and Obligation. There is evidence of still another element in the fabric. Portia's story up to her marriage is conditioned by her father's testament; her life's happiness is put into jeopardy by the tremendous chances of the choice of the caskets. How does she take this obligation? Out of friendship Antonio puts his life into jeopardy by the terms of the bond he enters into with Shylock. And unwitting, Shylock brings his own life into jeopardy of the statute law of Venice by the use he makes of Antonio's bond. Without doubt the entanglements that life chiefly meets in the story of the play take the form of obligations — some are legal in aspect, some are obligations that noble souls feel from their

own nobility. And these obligations all involve more or less clearly the question of money.

Obligation may be expressed formally, by "will," "oath," "bond," "ring," "forfeiture," "letter," "act," "statute." But there is, as well, obligation that is without other constraint than an inherent nobility of nature. Many things besides mercy are not strained — the bonds of family affection, the devotion of love, the fealty of friendship, the call of human helpfulness, the compelling idea of mercy; all aspiration, in short, of the finer spirit of life. At the outset of the play we hear the note "what I owe in money and in love." In the Trial Scene the letter of obligation wars against the spirit, the Ghetto against Belmont. If the play rings with the sound of ducats, it evolves also a deeper music, the harmony that is in immortal souls.

Here is where we approach the dominant spirit of the play. Our play is a good story — interesting human characters entangled in a series of romantic incidents developing on to a satisfactory conclusion. But the various crises of the story have, we find, a certain unity of theme. The reactions of the persons of the story through the series of crises give us the ultimate material for the determination of the theme of the play. We see each character in succession tried by the touchstones of money and obligation — we see them reacting nobly or basely. The play is a spectacle of people brought into the struggle of life with others less noble, entangled, persevering, and ultimately emerging beautifully.

The Merchant of Venice is not a play of race antagonism, though the chief character of the counteraction is a Jew. Shylock is in the play as a type of life, not of race, though race made him of necessity a hated money-lender. Shakespeare aims to portray the conduct of life in a complex, developed society. He presents the story so that the free virtues of the spirit — love, friendship, mercy, beauty, social obligation — are asserted over self-seeking, avarice, enforced obligation. These free virtues of the human spirit are of the essence of the Renaissance. In the conflict of conceptions of the aims of life in relation to money and obligation, Shake-

speare here sides with the Renaissance. And he resolves the discords of the play, in the closing act, into life with higher human values realized in music; beauty, love, which are left supreme. In this sense *The Merchant of Venice* is a culture drama.

III — THE STRUCTURE OF THE PLAY

The Main Actions. The plot is woven of two main actions and many subordinate ones. The main actions are a love comedy centring in the winning of Portia and a serious comedy of the revenge-intrigue type centring in Shylock. The link figure of the two actions is Antonio, from whom in consequence the play takes its name. These two actions are carried on with beautiful interrelation, supporting and intensifying the interest one of the other, from the exposition to the catastrophe. The Bassanio-Portia action, the prime scene of which is Belmont, offers a sort of background action, of moderate but prolonged dramatic interest, highly embellished in diction and sentiment. Against this background is enacted the briefer Antonio-Shylock story, the scene of which is Venice, which abounds in highly dramatic situations, clash of personalities and passions, quick reversals of fortune, ending in the great, if melodramatic, catastrophe of the Trial Scene. The two actions are bound together by the friendship of Antonio and Bassanio, which on the one hand occasions the bond and on the other enables Bassanio to win Portia; and this same friendship moves Portia won to save her husband's friend from the penalty of the bond by which he is jeopardized. Thus the Belmont Story starts the Bond Story, the Bond Story complicates the Belmont Story, and the Belmont Story brings about the resolution of the Bond Story.

The Sub-plots. The sub-plots are many. Each of them has its own particular interest, but each contributes its part to the main theme and the main actions. The fortunes of Morocco and Arragon develop the climacteric suspense of the wooing of Portia. The Gratiano-Nerissa story lightly and gracefully parallels the main love comedy while it knits

the necessary subordinate characters into a plot interest. The Lorenzo-Jessica story is the chief sub-action of the first half of the play. It affords a masque scene enhancing an elopement, which is always interesting; it is a parallel casket story, too, and a link action between the Shylock and Portia groups. But its real purpose is to motivate Shylock's spirit of revenge; for the loss of ducats and daughter fuses all hates in Shylock to white heat in a passion of revenge in the middle movement of the play, which makes credible the incredible story of the pound of flesh. The Launcelot story characterizes dramatically the miserliness and hard isolation of Shylock's life, and the clown's humor is the low note of the total gamut of comedy offered by the play. The sub-plot of the rings unites the middle and the end of the comedy action and resolves the last complication of the Trial Scene very gracefully, even if its method of "discovery" has been overworked.

These double actions and these subsidiary plots are interwoven by interrelations of the persons, by journeys, meetings, interchange of servants, letters. The total effect produced is a solid fabric, bold in design, romantic in color, full of repeated patterns, with exquisite variations and contrasts. So Shakespeare, like other artists of the Renaissance, loved to present the richness and variety of the web of life as he saw it.

IV — THE CHARACTERS OF THE PLAY

The characters of a play fall into groups the composition of which is determined by the actions to be represented. In *The Merchant of Venice* these groups are: the Merchant group of Antonio and his friends, who are a middle, or link group, to which the other groups are bound; the Belmont group of Portia, her household and suitors; the Ghetto group of Shylock and his set.

The Merchant Group. Antonio is the grave patrician merchant in a nation of marine merchants. Unwearied in well-doing in behalf of friends and fellow-merchants, capable of deep affection well in accord with his passive temperament,

proud of his world-wide trade, unselfish, upright, and honorable, he despises the predatory class of money-lenders, whose doings are in his eyes cruel, unchristian, and wicked. He is the pivotal figure of the play, on the one hand helping Bassanio to success and love, and on the other exposing himself to the malignity of his enemy, Shylock, and steadfast in adversity. It is as the pivotal figure merely that Antonio gives his title to the play. Salarino and Salanio are a setting and "chorus" for Antonio. Nearest him in friendship stands his kinsman, Bassanio, the hero of the high-comedy action, — young, well-born, high-spirited, prodigal in living, a spendthrift out of generosity, a borrower of his kinsman's money out of love; frank, simple-minded, honorable, bearing his plume and his heart high, having that in his nature which with time and marriage and the domestic ministrations of Portia will ripen to honorable repute. That Bassanio loves where money is, is a coincidence and must not be set to his discredit, though he is not of our modern world of work. Gratiano, a friend and companion, is a clever, amusing man-about-town, talkative, witty, light-hearted as he is light-headed, taking even marriage with a jest, but not without his two grains of wheat in his bushel of chaff. Lorenzo, another friend, is the romantic youth, poetic, loving beauty, passion, music, and moonlight:

"What of soul was left, I wonder, when the kissing had to stop?"

The Belmont Group. Foremost in the Belmont group stands Portia, the heroine of the high-comedy action, the ruling spirit of an idyllic social life. Portia is the spirit of the place, the genius of it all. She is the young gentlewoman endowed with all the fascination of mind and body and heart with which Shakespeare could endow woman — and he had a supply, the cynical think, beyond nature; witty, yet wise, with the grave note of wisdom born of responsibilities early imposed, the cares of riches and the deceitfulness of suitors; active, fearless, romantic; cultivated, yet not pedantic; imaginative, yet mistress of practical affairs;

fun-loving, adventurous, yet very much a lady; subtly observant of life, knowing men and the world, yet without losing her faith and her ardor; loving with absolute devotion and perfect self-surrender because of her faith in life and in love; and, with all her high station and the flattery that beats upon high station, tender of soul and humble of heart, yielding herself as wife in a wonderful marriage speech. Such a nature is an interpretation of life at its fairest, and when she touches evil she has powers of heart and intellect to resolve it into good.

In Portia's household the most significant figure is Nerissa, who serves as confidante and sprightly echo of her mistress, following her mistress's fashion even into marriage. The suitors characterize themselves in the lottery of the caskets, and their characters determine their destiny. They are merely episodic, serving to build up the climax of Bassanio's success.

The Ghetto Group. Shylock is represented in various phases of his life through the minor members of his group, — his daughter Jessica, his house servant Launcelot, and his associate in usury Tubal. The household life of Shylock is austere, miserly, loveless. For such a life Jessica, with her youth, charm, adventurousness, was ill suited. The spirit of the time found it lovable and praiseworthy of her to leave her father's house and religion, and even to overdo the expression of her repudiation. Life justifies her in the main action of her love story, and Jessica offers a charming element of youthful romantic love in her new environment of masque, and music, and moonlight. Launcelot as servant to Shylock offers the view of the miser's home by comic reactions. There, and subsequently at Belmont, Launcelot fulfils his part, which is to weave an element of anti-masque in both the high comedy and the tragicomedy.

Shylock is soon left, except for his compatriot Tubal, in hard and savage isolation. The interpretation of his character has been rendered difficult by social and psychological changes that have raised the status of the Jew and the business of money-lending. Contrast the England of to-day, where as

statesmen, judges, and bankers the Jews are among the foremost figures. From *The Jew of Malta* of Marlowe to the *Daniel Deronda* of George Eliot the wheel has come full circle. There seems to us something primitive and childlike in the laughter that rose from an Elizabethan audience at the exhibition of the madman, the imbecile, or the strange pariah figure of Shylock. It is not the least among Shakespeare's achievements that he has understood the figure that could grow up in the bitter environment of exile and make it stand like a giant tree, wrenched, gnarled, and broken, in an austere and loveless landscape.

The name of Shylock epitomizes the spirit of implacable exaction, yet the character is so created that his passions seem the human expression of his wrongs, and his qualities rise at times to such tragic greatness that his overthrow in the Trial Scene appears to some a travesty of justice. The character is individual. Implicit in it without doubt is a type character — the miser and usurer who is to be done out of his money; but Shylock is not the mere miser, the Euclio of Plautus, the Matthieu of Jodelle, or the Harpagon of Molière. He is a miser, no doubt; witness his aphorisms of selfishness, his arid home life, the ruin of his debtors; but he is an individual of manifold qualities, of deep, varied, and passionate personality. That personality combines a mastery of commercial affairs with knowledge of the merchants of Venice and their ventures. There is a deliberation, and, in a sense, dignity, and, above all, strength and force of personality; power to suffer, to endure, to wait. Hebraism of a kind tinges the whole of him — his language and allusions smack of the Scriptures; he recalls the money-changers of the Temple. There is an unpleasing gusto and volubility in his expression of greed or hate. He has humor and superb irony. Born in contumely and bred in derision, there has sprung up in his isolated and self-centred life necessarily something of the spirit of the jungle; his motives are all of the jungle. He has learned to prey and to hate and to plot — that is, within the bounds of the law, when he thinks himself safe. Ostracism in religion, in society, in business,

insult in personal relations, have produced in him an acrid bitterness of soul that blinds his vision to all higher values of life. The centring of his thought on money has made it the root of all evil to him. And the higher part of his nature, vestiges of which still remain in his memory, has atrophied in his environment and occupation. The great emotional strength of his nature floods into low channels of hate and revenge, when he is wronged or thwarted. Beside Marlowe's Barrabas in *The Jew of Malta*, Shylock is an intelligible humanized figure, an appealing study in sociology. Dramatically and psychologically, Shylock is the figure of supreme interest in the play, and he is the first figure in all Shakespeare's plays that can properly be ranked among his masterpieces of character creation. Shylock as a character of drama is one of the great rôles of the accomplished actor. Complexity of mentality, variety and range of passion, vital vigor of action, unite in this figure to afford the opportunity for the vivid presentation of human nature, which is the business of drama.

The figure of the usurer in Marlowe, Greene, Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher, Massinger, is the subject of a dissertation by Walter Reinicke, *Der Wucherer im Aelteren Englischen Drama*. Halle, 1907.

V — THE SCENE OF THE PLAY

The Twofold Scene. The double theme of the play is repeated in the double scene of the action. Shakespeare has here evolved, by virtue of his marvellous feeling for harmony, a high conception of the relation of action to scene and setting. Each part of the double action of the tragedy-comedy has its peculiar setting, and all that happens is reënforced by its appropriate tone and atmosphere. The Bond Story is enacted at Venice — the Venice of the merchant and money-lender — the scenes are the Rialto, the Ghetto, the debtor's prison, the Court of Justice; bonds and forfeits, wrongs and revenge, trials and judgments, — all the evils of life find their locale in Venice. The Casket Story is enacted at Belmont, and all the high comedy action centres there.

Belmont, the seat of Portia, is the expression of life when life is what it could be and our fortunes what, we think, they should be. To Belmont Bassanio goes to win love and fortune; in Belmont the wandering lovers, Lorenzo and Jessica, find a home; from Belmont comes salvation for Antonio; and in Belmont, finally, all true friends and true lovers gather, and the discords of life, amidst moonlight and music, are resolved into the fine union of according souls.

VI — CLASSIFICATION

The Merchant of Venice, because of the many stories woven into the action, is complex, or polymythic, in type. Because the total issue is fortunate, it is comedy, and because the most important part of the dramatic action is serious and passionate in its tone and matter, and almost tragic in its issue, the comedy is rightly characterized as serious comedy, or to use an older term, tragicomedy. Because the chief situation, incidents, and scenes appeal to the sense of wonder, uniting the elements of "strangeness and beauty," the play is in treatment romantic.

The material of the play, it must be admitted, is not of the stuff of which the greatest dramas are made. The characters respond humanly to the incidents of the story but the story itself is highly improbable. Both Casket Story and Bond Story are of remote folk-lore origin, and belong to a primitive period of society and art. Their inherent improbabilities are heightened by the modernization of the characters that figure in them. Only the romantic glamour that Shakespeare creates to suffuse them makes us yield "poetic credence" to such impossible fictions. Solutions, moreover, accomplished by chance, wit, and theatrical strokes rather than founded on character, are marks of secondary drama. The catastrophe of the foreground action and the disappearance of the chief dramatic character, Shylock, from the stage, coming in the Fourth Act, precludes the cumulative effect in the Fifth Act with which Shakespeare usually crowns the action of his greatest plays.

Yet *The Merchant of Venice* holds high and lasting place among all romantic comedies. The dramatic story full of incident, conflict, and suspense, the variety and charm of the persons of the drama, especially the dramatic possibilities of Shylock and Portia, the stage-craft that yields the Trial Scene, the best known scene in Shakespeare, the flow of rich comment on life expressed in perfect diction set with unforgettable phrases, the romantic glamour and beautiful vision of life in Belmont — these give enduring quality to this play.

But unto us she hath a spell beyond
Her name in story, and her long array
Of mighty shadows, whose dim forms despond
Above the dogeless city's vanish'd sway;
Ours is a trophy which will not decay
With the Rialto; Shylock and the Moor,
And Pierre, cannot be swept or worn away, —
The keystone of the arch! though all were o'er,
For us repeopled were the solitary shore.

The beings of the mind are not of clay;
Essentially immortal, they create
And multiply in us a brighter ray
And more beloved existence: that which Fate
Prohibits to dull life, in this our state
Of mortal bondage, by these spirits supplied.
First exiles, then replaces what we hate;
Watering the heart whose early flowers have died,
And with a fresher growth replenishing the void.

Childe Harold, IV, iv, v.

VII — DATE OF COMPOSITION

The Composition of the Play. *The Merchant of Venice* seems to have been first written and played towards the end of 1596. The play shows Marlowe's influence in the characterization of Shylock, the story of Jessica, and the description of Antonio's wealth; it has here and there echoes of other early dramatists, Kyd and Greene; rimed lines are frequent. All this means an early place in Shakespeare's work. But not too early a place; for the copious thought and fine workmanship show Shakespeare rounding to the full;

the structure approaches Shakespeare's perfected method — witness the closing of the First Act, the clear-cut dual climax and dual turn of the Third Act; these are not found in his plays prior to 1596. Yet the structure is still imperfect — witness the falling off of dramatic interest in the Fifth Act compared with the structure of the final version of *Romeo and Juliet*, 1597. Shakespeare drew, it has been pointed out, the arguments of the Trial Scene in part from Silvan's *Cent histoires Tragiques* — possibly from the English translation called *The Orator*, printed in 1596. Then, too, the Moonlight Scene (V, i) was imitated (Whalley) by another dramatist in *Wily Beguiled*, played (Fleay), July, 1597. Francis Meres, in his comment on Shakespeare's plays, in *Palladis Tamia*, printed in 1598, mentions *The Merchant of Venice* last in his list of Shakespeare's comedies. In that same year it was licensed for printing (although not printed until later), as recorded in the Stationers' Register.

VIII — OLD LITERARY MATERIAL INCORPORATED IN THE PLAY

Sources of the Plot. The plot of *The Merchant of Venice* is a composite of stories the crude materials of which came mainly from the mass of literary material available to every Elizabethan dramatist. The plot of the play is woven of three once independent stories — the Bond Story, the Lady of Belmont Story, and the Three Caskets Story. All were told ages before Shakespeare. The Bond, for instance, with its apparent helpfulness to the signer and its hidden implicit tragedy is frequent in folk-lore; it is the basis of the Faust legend, of the legend of Macbeth and the witches, as well as of *The Merchant of Venice*.

I. Main Source. The story of *The Merchant of Venice*, as Capell first pointed out, was told before Shakespeare by Ser Giovanni of Florence as the first story of the Fourth Day in his story collection called *Il Pecorone* (printed 1558). This Italian story tells of three attempts made by a Florentine youth, the adopted son of a rich Venetian merchant,

to win the Lady of Belmont. (Belmont was "a fair port" and castle on the road from Venice to Alexandria.) Two attempts failed, and a ship was the forfeit for each failure; for the third attempt the foster-father lent not only all he had, but pledged a pound of his flesh for ten thousand crowns to "a Jew at Mestri." The third attempt succeeded, by the aid of the Lady's maid. The date of repayment came and passed, and the lover at Belmont remembered too late the obligation. The Jew had the foster-father seized, and claimed the execution of the bond. From this predicament he was rescued by the skill of the Lady of Belmont, disguised as a lawyer from Bologna, as told in the Trial Scene. The revelation of her clever service came to her husband through the ring which she claimed as her reward. The close relation of the play to the Italian *novella* is obvious.

The story is given in translation by Collier, *Shakespeare's Library*, ii, pp. 65 ff.; and by Furness, *Var.*, pp. 298 ff.

Shakespeare may have used, in addition to Ser Giovanni's novelette, an English play probably based on it — the lost play of *The Jew*, which was "shown at the Bull" (*i.e.*, the Bull Inn, London). We know of the play through Stephen Gosson, who, in his *School of Abuse* (of the drama), 1579, speaks of *The Jew* as a play "without rebuke . . . representing the greediness of worldly choosers and the bloody minds of usurers." This description suggests that the lost play had the Three Caskets Story (hence the Lady of Belmont) and the Bond Story (hence the Shylock character). *The Jew* continued to be played, no doubt, till Christopher Marlowe's *Jew of Malta* (1589, acted 1592, by the Lord Admiral's Players) superseded it. Whereupon, no doubt, Shakespeare had the task of recreating *The Jew* in the form of *The Merchant of Venice* for his own company, the Lord Chamberlain's Players.

Ser Giovanni did not invent the story; it is precisely a literary version, with romantic coloring, of a folk-lore story of great antiquity and wide distribution. Such a story is included in the *Gesta Romanorum*, the most popular story collection of the Middle Ages. (The *Gesta Romanorum* was

compiled in England in Latin towards the end of the thirteenth century.) In the *Gesta* the Bond Story is No. XL and is related as having happened under "Selestinus a Wise Emperor." The daughter of the Emperor was sought thrice by a knight: twice he failed; to make a third trial he had to go to a far country and borrow money on the security of all his flesh; but there "Virgil the Philosopher" told him that a magic letter hid in the lady's bed was his real obstacle. So he succeeded, but in his happiness he forgot the day of his bond. The princess disguised as a knight saved him before the court on the plea of shedding no blood. Returned, she showed herself to the knight in her disguise, and he gratefully acknowledged the obligation.

The *Gesta Romanorum* story thus unites both the Bond Story and the Lady of Belmont Story, but to Ser Giovanni we apparently owe the modernization of the story, the localizing of the scenes in Venice and Belmont, the differentiation of the lover and borrower into two kinsmen, the development of the story of the Lady of Belmont and her maid, the more exact "pound of flesh," the episode of the ring, and, above all, the characterization of "the merchant" who lent the money as "the Jew of Mestri."

In another of the older variants, told about the end of the thirteenth century in the *Cursor Mundi*, there is no lady in the story; the Christian goldsmith in Constantinople borrowed money from a Jew on the security of an equal weight of flesh. The judges saved him by the usual distinction between flesh and blood. Here we reach presumably the simplest form of the story. The scene in Constantinople suggests the ultimate Eastern origin of the Bond Story.

One of the variants of the Bond Story appears in the old English ballad of unknown date of *Gernutus, a Jew*. (Reprinted in 1754 by Bishop Percy from a black-letter copy.) This ballad renders the old and simple form of the story like that in the *Cursor Mundi*, in which the Bond Story is quite independent of the Lady of Belmont Story and of the Casket Story. As a version of the Bond Story it is interesting as containing elements found in Shakespeare's version: the

suggestion of the miserly life of the usurer; the details of the plot against the merchant — the loan is “to do a good turn” and for “a merry jest” — the reason that the merchant cannot repay — “because his ships are all at sea”; the offers of repayment by various friends; the “bloody Jew,” with his “whetted blade”; the dramatic treatment of the climax — “Stay,” at the critical moment; the threat of hanging if he shed one drop of blood; “your forfeiture now take”; the departure of the Jew after railing at the judge — “he biddeth them farewell.” Where the ballad has color and good phrases, these are found also in *The Merchant of Venice*, though they are not in *Il Pecorone*. Shakespeare either knew the old ballad, or the ballad-writer knew the play, or they both used the lost play of *The Jew*; it is a guess which. The ballad-writer cites his authority “as Italian writers tell,” which shows how Ser Giovanni’s story was fixed in the popular mind as a source and authority for the Bond Story. It is highly probable that the ballad depends directly on *The Jew*, the prologue of which would naturally assert the Italian authority, so that in *Gernutus* we probably have the Bond Story as rendered in the lost play.

The ballad of *Gernutus* is reprinted and discussed in Furness, Var., pp. 288–293.

First Variation — The Three Caskets Story. The main source of the plot is Ser Giovanni’s story, but the play shows important variations. The physical conquest of the Lady of Belmont was not dramatic material; Shakespeare modified that part of the story by substituting the romantic story known as the Three Caskets. In this he may have followed the proto-play of *The Jew*. The device of the choice of (usually) three caskets to determine character or luck, or to inculcate the lesson of not trusting appearances, appears in folk-lore everywhere, back to remote antiquity. The Three Caskets Story is found, for instance, in “Ancelmus the Emperor,” LXVI of the *Gesta Romanorum*: Three caskets of gold, silver, and lead, with their several appearances and

contrasting contents and cryptic inscriptions, are offered to the Princess of Naples for her choice to test her as a fit bride for the son of the Emperor of Rome. She meditates over these, and chooses, "as God hath disposed," the leaden casket, and wins.

An English version of the Casket Story was printed by Wynkyn de Worde (1510-1515) and again by Richard Robinson in seven editions of selections of the *Gesta Romanorum* from 1577-1602, and furnishes naturally Shakespeare's source for this part of the plot. The Three Caskets Story is ultimately of Eastern origin.

The most available reprint of the story is in Bohn's ed. of Swan's translation of *Gesta Romanorum* and Morley's ed. of *Medieval Tales*, in Routledge's *World Library*. Robinson's version is reprinted in Collier's *Shakespeare's Library*, II, 102 ff., and in part in Furness, Var., 315 f.

As Shakespeare was rendering the Three Caskets Story in the plot, he saw opportunity to add to the dramatic interest. One woman making a single choice became three lovers of three nationalities, developing a climacteric series as they declaim, come to the test, and make their point.

These scenes had precursors on the stage. In Kyd's play of *Soliman and Perseda* (?-1588) the contestants in arms at the nuptials of the Prince of Cyprus are the Englishman, the Frenchman, the Spaniard, the Turk, the German. The Turk's boast, like Morocco's, is:

"Against the Sophy in three pitchèd fields,
Under the conduct of great Soliman,
Have I been chief commander of a host."

Greene's *Orlando Furioso* (acted, 1592) opens with a scene at the palace of the Emperor of Africa, showing the suitors gathered from all courts to sue for the hand of his daughter; and each makes his boast in the style of Morocco.

Second Variation — The Development of the Bond Story.

1. **The Usurer.** In Ser Giovanni's short story the Jew is characterized only as "a Jew at Mestri" (village on the mainland nearest Venice), who insists on his bond and pound of flesh only "that he might have the satisfaction of saying

that he had put to death the greatest of the Christian merchants"; and who was "inflexible." Instead of this scanty outline the play offers us the full rich and complex personality we call Shylock. The suggestion for this development came to Shakespeare from the work of his great contemporary, Christopher Marlowe. Shakespeare's Shylock was, in the days of his creation, an immediate and direct challenge to Marlowe's Barrabas (in Marlowe, pronounced *bar' ah bas*) in *The Jew of Malta* (?-1589). Marlowe's Barrabas is the conception of a passionate domineering character wrought by robbery and religious hate to crafty schemes of remorseless wholesale murder that end in his own undoing. Compared with Barrabas, Shakespeare's Shylock is a mild-mannered gentleman — certainly a more humanized and so a more credible figure, a truer and so a more lasting study in individual and social psychology. Nevertheless the prototype of Shylock is Barrabas. As usurer Shylock is related as a type character to the literature of many nations and many ages from Plautus to Sir Walter Scott.

2. The Usurer's Daughter. Nothing is said in the originals of the Bond Story of the Jew's family. The sub-plot of the Jew's daughter and her elopement with the lover's friend is Shakespeare's addition to the older story to give fresh and adequate motive for the Bond Story. The immediate source of this "situation of three"—the rich Jew, the "faithless" daughter, and the Christian lover — is offered in Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*, in the relations of Barrabas, Abigail, and Don Mathias. Sir Walter Scott repeated the situation in the story of Isaac of York, Rebecca, and Bois-Guilbert (*Ivanhoe*). The sub-plot may go back, as Dunlop suggested, to the story collection of Massuccio of Salerno (c. 1470); the Fourteenth Tale tells of the rich miser of Naples, the close-kept daughter, the elopement with the lover and the jewels, and the miser's grief.

3. The Trial Scene. Shakespeare's development of the Trial Scene is twofold: (a) the detailed presentation of the proceedings; and (b) the perfecting of the plot to involve Shylock in a return of Nemesis.

(a) The elaboration that Shakespeare gave this part of the plot may be judged by contrasting the trial in the original story (*Il Pecorone*) with its 76 lines (Furness, Var.) with the 450 lines of our play. The legal procedure he presents is roughly that of the old Roman Law. The interesting thing in that procedure is that it was moulded by the same inherent principles as dramatic procedure. (Sir Henry Maine, *Ancient Law*, pp. 268 f.) The Roman trial at law has the unity of scene and action, the conflict, complication, climax, turn, resolution, and catastrophe of the drama. In Shakespeare's hands the Trial Scene becomes a drama in miniature. The arguments in the case are based on the *Il Pecorone* story supplemented by the debate on the famous Pound of Flesh case in Silvan's *Epitomes De cents Histoires Tragiques*, (Declamation XCV), which was printed in France in 1581, 1588, and Englished and printed in London under the title of *The Orator* in 1596. Portia's Mercy Speech is drawn from Cicero's discourse on *Mercy*.

The English version of Silvan is reprinted in Hazlitt's *Shakespeare Library*, I, 355 ff., and Furness, Var., 310 ff. Parallel passages from W. H. Harrison by Furnival, in the *Introd. to Q² Facsimile*.

(b) *Nemesis in the Trial Scene*. Shakespeare added to the story a sterner nemesis than is found in *Il Pecorone*. The idea of "the biter bitten" has pleased the world in proverb and story to remote antiquity. It was not enough that Shylock should lose his money; his aim was Antonio's life, and to be quit at the loss of his loan was not poetical justice, not even justice. It is possible that the hint for the turn Shakespeare gives at the catastrophe of the Trial Scene, when he overwhelms Shylock, came from Nash's *Unfortunate Traveller*, 1593. There Nash relates how master and servant have come to Venice and are there exposed to a conspiracy; "I said I would try what the law could do. *Conspiracy by the custom of their country was a capital offence, and what custom or justice might afford they should be all sure to feel.*" (Ed. McKerrow, II, 257.) Dr. Lopez, it will be remembered, was condemned to death for conspiracy.

The development of the sub-plots called for additional characters, whose nature was determined by the needs of the play, — Gratiano as a foil to Bassanio, Launcelot and Old Gobbo as clowns in the farce comedy usual in the interludes of the Shakespeare comedy. The names of all characters in the play are of Shakespeare's choosing.

Out of the crude material, gathered as we see from the rich story material available in Elizabethan times to the wise and industrious reader, Shakespeare built his play. He did not invent those crude materials. Was it worth while to make bricks when he could rear palaces? Like Molière, he took his property wherever he found it; he built out of it an organic composition of the highest significant humanity. Shakespeare's genius lay in this highest form of organic composition: the power to select and blend and unite, to inform everything with a great dramatic idea and purpose, and to express all in copious and fascinating language.

For a more extended view of the sources of *The Merchant of Venice*, see Furness, Var., and for more recent discussions, C. K. Pooler, Introd. to *The Merchant of Venice*, in the "Arden Shakespeare" series.

IX — THE FIRST PRINTED COPIES OF THE PLAY

The Printed Text. The first reference to the printing of *The Merchant of Venice* is the entry in the Stationers' Register under the date of July 22, 1598, when James Roberts got permission to print the play, "The Marchaunt of Venyce or otherwise called the Jewe of Venyce," on condition, however, that he or any other should have, before printing it, a further license therefor, from the Lord Chamberlain (under whose protection was the actors' company who controlled the play).

The play was actually first printed in 1600. Two versions are ascribed to that year, the pseudo-first quarto (Q¹) printed for J. Roberts, now held to have been printed in 1619, though dated 1600 (W. J. Neidig, *The Shakespeare Quartos of 1619*, *Modern Philology*, October, 1910), and the

second (really the first) quarto (Q²) printed for Thomas Hayes by and with the consent of I. R. (? James Roberts). The title of the play in both editions is practically the same; *The Most (The Q¹) Excellent Historie of the Merchant of Venice. With the extreme crueltie of Shylocke the Jewe towards the saide Merchant, in cutting a iust pound of his flesh: and the obtayning of Portia by the choyse of three chests (Caskets, Q¹). Written by William Shakespeare. — 1600. (Q²).*

The text of pseudo-Q¹ is practically identical with that of Q² except that Q² is, on the whole, printed with more careful attention to the text and less careful attention to minute typographical accuracy.

Later Quartos were printed — Q³ in 1637, which added the list of *dramatis personæ*, and Q⁴ in 1652; they have no independent value.

In the first collected edition of Shakespeare's plays, known as the First Folio (F¹), 1623, *The Merchant of Venice* is found among the comedies, pp. 163–184; the text of F¹ is that of Q with minor changes such as additional stage directions. The second Folio, 1632, (F²) reprints F¹ with less typographical care.

The present edition is based naturally on the text of Q², the real first quarto and presumably nearer to Shakespeare's manuscript; collation has been made of Quarto and Folio readings; emendations universally accepted have been incorporated in the text; spelling and punctuation have of course been modernized. The division and number of the acts are first given in F¹ — Actus primus, Actus secundus, etc.; the scene numbers are added by later editors.

The discussion of the best text of the play and the relation of quarto and folio editions is found in Furnival's introduction to Grigg's facsimile reproduction of Q¹ and Q².

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

THE DUKE OF VENICE.

THE PRINCE OF MOROCCO, } *suitors to Portia*
THE PRINCE OF ARRAGON, }

ANTONIO, *a merchant of Venice.*

BASSANIO, *his friend, suitor likewise to Portia.*

SALANIO, }
SALARINO, } *gentlemen of Venice and friends to Antonio*
GRATIANO, } *Bassanio.*
SALERIO, }

LORENZO, *in love with Jessica.*

SHYLOCK, *a rich Jew.*

TUBAL, *a Jew, friend to Shylock.*

LAUNCELOT GOBBO, *the clown, servant to Shylock, afterwards to Bassanio.*

OLD GOBBO, *father to Launcelot.*

LEONARDO, *servant to Bassanio.*

BALTHASAR, } *servants to Portia.*
STEPHANO, }

PORTIA, *a rich heiress, the Lady of Belmont.*

NERISSA, *her waiting-gentlewoman.*

JESSICA, *daughter to Shylock.*

Magnificoes of Venice, Officers of the Court of Justice, Gaoler,
Servants to Portia, and other Attendants.

SCENE : *Partly at Venice, and partly at Belmont, the seat of Portia.*

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

Act First

Scene I

Venice. A Street.

Enter ANTONIO, SALARINO, and SALANIO.

Antonio. In sooth, I know not why I am so sad.

It wearies me ; you say it wearies you ;
But how I caught it, found it, or came by it,
What stuff 'tis made of, whereof it is born,
I am to learn ; and such a want-wit sadness
makes of me

5

That I have much ado to know myself.

Salarino. Your mind is tossing on the ocean —

There where your argosies with portly sail,
Like signiors and rich burghers on the flood,
Or, as it were, the pageants of the sea,
Do overpeer the petty traffickers

10

That curtsy to them, do them reverence,
As they fly by them with their woven wings.

Salanio. Believe me, sir, had I such venture forth,

The better part of my affections would
Be with my hopes abroad. I should be still
Plucking the grass to know where sits the wind,

15

Peering in maps for ports and piers and roads ;
 And every object, that might make me fear
 Misfortune to my ventures, out of doubt 20
 Would make me sad.

Salar. My wind, cooling my broth,
 Would blow me to an ague, when I thought
 What harm a wind too great at sea might do.
 I should not see the sandy hour-glass run,
 But I should think of shallows and of flats, 25
 And see my wealthy *Andrew* docked in sand
 Vailing her high top lower than her ribs
 To kiss her burial. Should I go to church
 And see the holy edifice of stone,
 And not bethink me straight of dangerous rocks, 30
 Which, touching but my gentle vessel's side,
 Would scatter all her spices on the stream,
 Enrobe the roaring waters with my silks ;
 And, in a word, but even now worth this,
 And now worth nothing? Shall I have the thought 35
 To think on this, and shall I lack the thought
 That such a thing bechanced would make me sad?
 But tell not me, I know Antonio
 Is sad to think upon his merchandise.

Ant. Believe me, no. I thank my fortune for it, 40
 My ventures are not in one bottom trusted,
 Nor to one place ; nor is my whole estate
 Upon the fortune of this present year.
 Therefore my merchandise makes me not sad.

Salar. Why, then you are in love !

Ant. Fie, fie ! 45

Salar. Not in love neither? Then let us say you are sad
 Because you are not merry ; and 'twere as easy

For you to laugh and leap and say you are merry,
Because you are not sad. Now, by two-headed
Janus,

Nature hath framed strange fellows in her time : 50
Some that will evermore peep through their eyes,
And laugh like parrots at a bag-piper ;
And other of such vinegar aspect,
That they'll not show their teeth in way of smile,
Though Nestor swear the jest be laughable. 55

Enter BASSANIO, LORENZO, and GRATIANO.

Salan. Here comes Bassanio, your most noble kinsman,
Gratiano, and Lorenzo. Fare ye well,
We leave you now with better company.

Salar. I would have stayed till I had made you merry,
If worthier friends had not prevented me. 60

Ant. Your worth is very dear in my regard.
I take it, your own business calls on you,
And you embrace the occasion to depart.

Salar. Good morrow, my good lords.

Bassanio. Good signiors both, when shall we laugh?
say, when? 65

You grow exceeding strange ; must it be so ?

Salar. We'll make our leisures to attend on yours.

[Exeunt SALARINO and SALANIO.]

Lorenzo. My Lord Bassanio, since you have found Antonio,

We two will leave you ; but at dinner-time,
I pray you, have in mind where we must meet. 70

Bass. I will not fail you.

Gratiano. You look not well, Signior Antonio ;
You have too much respect upon the world.

They lose it that do buy it with much care.

Believe me, you are marvellously changed.

75

Ant. I hold the world but as the world, Gratiano ;

A stage, where every man must play a part,

And mine a sad one.

Gra. Let me play the fool ;

With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come ;

And let my liver rather heat with wine

80

Than my heart cool with mortifying groans.

Why should a man whose blood is warm within

Sit like his grandsire cut in alabaster ? —

Sleep when he wakes, and creep into the jaundice

By being peevish ? I tell thee what, Antonio, —

85

I love thee, and it is my love that speaks, —

There are a sort of men whose visages

Do cream and mantle like a standing pond ;

And do a wilful stillness entertain

With purpose to be dressed in an opinion

90

Of wisdom, gravity, profound conceit ;

As who should say, *I am Sir Oracle,*

And, when I ope my lips, let no dog bark !

O my Antonio, I do know of these

That therefore only are reputed wise

95

For saying nothing ; when, I am very sure,

If they should speak, would almost damn those ears

Which, hearing them, would call their brothers fools.

I'll tell thee more of this another time.

But fish not with this melancholy bait

100

For this fool gudgeon, this opinion.

Come, good Lorenzo. Fare ye well awhile ;

I'll end my exhortation after dinner.

Lor. Well, we will leave you, then, till dinner-time.

I must be one of these same dumb wise men, 105
For Gratiano never lets me speak.

Gra. Well, keep me company but two years moe,
Thou shalt not know the sound of thine own tongue.

Ant. Fare you well; I'll grow a talker for this gear.

Gra. Thanks, i' faith; for silence is only commendable 110
In a neat's tongue dried, and a maid not vendible.

[*Exeunt GRATIANO and LORENZO.*]

Ant. Is that anything now?

Bass. Gratiano speaks an infinite deal of nothing, more
than any man in all Venice. His reasons are as
two grains of wheat hid in two bushels of chaff; you 115
shall seek all day ere you find them, and when you
have them they are not worth the search.

Ant. Well, tell me now, what lady is the same
To whom you swore a secret pilgrimage
That you to-day promised to tell me of? 120

Bass. 'Tis not unknown to you, Antonio,
How much I have disabled mine estate,
By something showing a more swelling port
Than my faint means would grant continuance.
Nor do I now make moan to be abridged 125
From such a noble rate; but my chief care
Is, to come fairly off from the great debts
Wherein my time, something too prodigal,
Hath left me gaged. To you, Antonio,
I owe the most, in money and in love; 130
And from your love I have a warranty
To unburthen all my plots and purposes
How to get clear of all the debts I owe.

Ant. I pray you, good Bassanio, let me know it;
And if it stand, as you yourself still do, 135

Within the eye of honor, be assured
My purse, my person, my extremest means,
Lie all unlocked to your occasions.

Bass. In my school-days, when I had lost one shaft,
I shot his fellow of the self-same flight 140
The self-same way, with more advisèd watch,
To find the other forth; and by adventuring both,
I oft found both. I urge this childhood proof
Because what follows is pure innocence.
I owe you much; and, like a wilful youth, 145
That which I owe is lost; but if you please
To shoot another arrow that self way
Which you did shoot the first, I do not doubt,
As I will watch the aim, or to find both,
Or bring your latter hazard back again, 150
And thankfully rest debtor for the first.

Ant. You know me well, and herein spend but time
To wind about my love with circumstance;
And out of doubt you do me now more wrong
In making question of my uttermost 155
Than if you had made waste of all I have.
Then do but say to me what I should do,
That in your knowledge may by me be done,
And I am prest unto it; therefore, speak.

Bass. In Belmont is a lady richly left; 160
And she is fair, and, fairer than that word,
Of wondrous virtues. Sometimes from her eyes
I did receive fair speechless messages.
Her name is Portia, — nothing undervalued
To Cato's daughter, Brutus' Portia. 165
Nor is the wide world ignorant of her worth;
For the four winds blow in from every coast

Renownèd suitors ; and her sunny locks
Hang on her temples like a golden fleece ;
Which makes her seat of Belmont Colchos' strand, 170
And many Jasons come in quest of her.
O my Antonio, had I but the means
To hold a rival place with one of them,
I have a mind presages me such thrift
That I should questionless be fortunate. 175

Ant. Thou know'st that all my fortunes are at sea ;
Neither have I money, nor commodity
To raise a present sum. Therefore go forth ;
Try what my credit can in Venice do ;
That shall be racked, even to the uttermost, 180
To furnish thee to Belmont, to fair Portia.
Go presently inquire, and so will I,
Where money is ; and I no question make
To have it of my trust, or for my sake. [*Exeunt.*]

Scene II

Belmont. A room in Portia's house.

Enter PORTIA with her waiting-gentlewoman, NERISSA.

Portia. By my troth, Nerissa, my little body is aweary
of this great world.

Nerissa. You would be, sweet madam, if your miseries
were in the same abundance as your good fortunes
are. And yet, for aught I see, they are as sick that 5
surfeit with too much, as they that starve with nothing.
It is no mean happiness, therefore, to be seated
in the mean ; superfluity comes sooner by white
hairs, but competency lives longer,

Por. Good sentences, and well pronounced. 10

Ner. They would be better, if well followed.

Por. If to do were as easy as to know what were good to do, chapels had been churches, and poor men's cottages princes' palaces. It is a good divine that follows his own instructions. I can easier teach 15 twenty what were good to be done, than be one of the twenty to follow mine own teaching. The brain may devise laws for the blood; but a hot temper leaps o'er a cold decree. Such a hare is madness the youth, to skip o'er the meshes of good counsel the cripple. 20 — But this reasoning is not in the fashion to choose me a husband. — O me, the word *choose*! I may neither choose whom I would, nor refuse whom I dislike; so is the will of a living daughter curbed by the will of a dead father. Is it not hard, Nerissa, 25 that I cannot choose one, nor refuse none?

Ner. Your father was ever virtuous; and holy men at their death have good inspirations. Therefore the lottery that he hath devised in these three chests of gold, silver, and lead, — whereof who chooses his 30 meaning chooses you, — will, no doubt, never be chosen by any rightly but one who in you shall rightly love. But what warmth is there in your affection towards any of these princely suitors that are already come? 35

Por. I pray thee, over-name them; and as thou namest them, I will describe them; and according to my description level at my affection.

Ner. First, there is the Neapolitan prince.

Por. Ay, that's a colt indeed, for he doth nothing but 40 talk of his horse; and he makes it a great appro-

priation to his own good parts that he can shoe him himself.

Ner. Then there is the County Palatine.

Por. He doth nothing but frown; as who should say, *If* 45
you will not have me, choose. He hears merry tales,
and smiles not; I fear he will prove the weeping
philosopher when he grows old, being so full of un-
mannerly sadness in his youth. I had rather be
married to a death's-head with a bone in his mouth 50
than to either of these. God defend me from these
two!

Ner. How say you by the French lord, Monsieur Le
Bon?

Por. God made him, and therefore let him pass for a 55
man. In truth, I know it is a sin to be a mocker;
but, he! — why, he hath a horse better than the
Neapolitan's; a better bad habit of frowning than
the Count Palatine; he is every man in no man. If
a throstle sing, he falls straight a-capering; he will 60
fence with his own shadow. If I should marry him,
I should marry twenty husbands. If he would de-
spise me, I would forgive him; for if he love me to
madness, I shall never requite him.

Ner. What say you, then, to Falconbridge, the young 65
Baron of England?

Por. You know I say nothing to him; for he under-
stands not me, nor I him. He hath neither Latin,
French, nor Italian; and you will come into the
court and swear that I have a poor pennyworth in 70
the English. He is a proper man's picture; but,
alas, who can converse with a dumb-show? How
oddly he is suited! I think he bought his doublet

in Italy, his round hose in France, his bonnet in Germany, and his behavior everywhere.

75

Ner. What think you of the Scottish lord, his neighbor?

Por. That he hath a neighborly charity in him; for he borrowed a box of the ear of the Englishman, and swore he would pay him again when he was able; I think the Frenchman became his surety, and sealed under for another.

80

Ner. How like you the young German, the Duke of Saxony's nephew?

Por. Very vilely in the morning, when he is sober; and most vilely in the afternoon, when he is drunk. When he is best, he is a little worse than a man; and when he is worst, he is little better than a beast. And the worst fall that ever fell, I hope I shall make shift to go without him.

85

Ner. If he should offer to choose, and choose the right casket, you should refuse to perform your father's will, if you should refuse to accept him.

90

Por. Therefore, for fear of the worst, I pray thee, set a deep glass of Rhenish wine on the contrary casket; for, if the devil be within and that temptation without, I know he will choose it. I will do anything, Nerissa, ere I'll be married to a sponge.

95

Ner. You need not fear, lady, the having any of these lords. They have acquainted me with their determinations; which is, indeed, to return to their home, and to trouble you with no more suit, unless you may be won by some other sort than your father's imposition, depending on the caskets.

100

Por. If I live to be as old as Sibylla, I will die as chaste as Diana, unless I be obtained by the manner of my

105

father's will. I am glad this parcel of wooers are so reasonable; for there is not one among them but I dote on his very absence; and I pray God grant them a fair departure.

Ner. Do you not remember, lady, in your father's time, 110
a Venetian, a scholar, and a soldier, that came hither in company of the Marquis of Montferrat?

Por. Yes, yes, it was Bassanio; as I think, so was he called.

Ner. True, madam: he, of a'l the men that ever my 115
foolish eyes looked upon, was the best deserving a fair lady.

Por. I remember him well; and I remember him worthy of thy praise.

Enter a Serving-man.

How now! what news? 120

Serv. The four strangers seek for you, madam, to take their leave: and there is a forerunner come from a fifth, the Prince of Morocco; who brings word, the Prince his master will be here to-night.

Por. If I could bid the fifth welcome with so good a 125
heart as I can bid the other four farewell, I should be glad of his approach. If he have the condition of a saint and the complexion of a devil, I had rather he should shrive me than wive me.

Come, Nerissa. Sirrah, go before. Whiles we shut 130
the gates upon one wooer, another knocks at the door.
[*Exeunt.*]

Scene III

Venice. A Public Place.

Enter BASSANIO with SHYLOCK, the Jew.

Shylock. Three thousand ducats ; well.

Bassanio. Ay, sir, for three months.

Shy. For three months ; well.

Bass. For the which, as I told you, Antonio shall be bound.

5

Shy. Antonio shall become bound ; well.

Bass. May you stead me ? Will you pleasure me ?
Shall I know your answer ?

Shy. Three thousand ducats, for three months, and Antonio bound.

10

Bass. Your answer to that.

Shy. Antonio is a good man.

Bass. Have you heard any imputation to the contrary ?

Shy. Ho, no, no, no, no. My meaning, in saying he is a good man, is to have you understand me that he is sufficient. Yet his means are in supposition ; he hath an argosy bound to Tripolis, another to the Indies ; I understand, moreover, upon the Rialto, he hath a third at Mexico, a fourth for England, and other ventures he hath, squandered abroad. But ships are but boards, sailors but men ; there be land-rats and water-rats, water-thieves and land-thieves, — I mean pirates ; and then there is the peril of waters, winds, and rocks. The man is, notwithstanding, sufficient. Three thousand ducats ; I think I may take his bond.

15

20

25

Bass. Be assured you may.

Shy. I will be assured I may; and, that I may be assured, I will bethink me. May I speak with Antonio?

30

Bass. If it please you to dine with us.

Shy. Yes, to smell pork; to eat of the habitation which your prophet the Nazarite conjured the devil into. I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you, and so following; but I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you. What news on the Rialto? Who is he comes here?

35

Enter ANTONIO.

Bass. This is Signior Antonio.

Shy. [*Aside*] How like a fawning publican he looks! I hate him for he is a Christian;
But more for that in low simplicity
He lends out money gratis and brings down
The rate of usance here with us in Venice.
If I can catch him once upon the hip,
I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him.
He hates our sacred nation; and he rails,
Even there where merchants most do congregate,
On me, my bargains, and my well-won thrift,
Which he calls interest. Cursed be my tribe,
If I forgive him!

40

45

Bass. Shylock, do you hear?

50

Shy. I am debating of my present store;
And, by the near guess of my memory,
I cannot instantly raise up the gross
Of full three thousand ducats. What of that?
Tubal, a wealthy Hebrew of my tribe,
Will furnish me. But soft! how many months

55

Do you desire? [*To ANTONIO*] Rest you fair, good signior;

Your worship was the last man in our mouths.

Antonio. Shylock, although I neither lend nor borrow
By taking nor by giving of excess, 60
Yet, to supply the ripe wants of my friend,
I'll break a custom. Is he yet possessed
How much ye would?

Shy. Ay, ay, three thousand ducats.

Ant. And for three months.

Shy. I had forgot; three months, you told me so. 65
Well then, your bond; and let me see, but hear
you;

Methought you said you neither lend nor borrow
Upon advantage.

Ant. I do never use it.

Shy. When Jacob grazed his uncle Laban's sheep, —
This Jacob from our holy Abram was, 70
As his wise mother wrought in his behalf,
The third possessor; ay, he was the third, —

Ant. And what of him? did he take interest?

Shy. No, not take interest; not, as you would say,
Directly interest: mark what Jacob did. 75
When Laban and himself were compromised
That all the eanlings which were streaked and pied
Should fall as Jacob's hire, . . .

The skilful shepherd peeled me certain wands;
He stuck them up before the fulsome ewes, 80
Who, then conceiving, did in eaning time
Fall parti-colored lambs, and those were Jacob's.
This was a way to thrive, and he was blest;
And thrift is blessing, if men steal it not.

Ant. This was a venture, sir, that Jacob served for ; 85
A thing not in his power to bring to pass,
But swayed and fashioned by the hand of heaven.
Was this inserted to make interest good ?
Or is your gold and silver ewes and rams ?

Shy. I cannot tell ; I make it breed as fast. 90
But note me, signior.

Ant. Mark you this, Bassanio,
The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose.
An evil soul producing holy witness
Is like a villain with a smiling cheek,
A goodly apple rotten at the heart. 95
O, what a goodly outside falsehood hath !

Shy. Three thousand ducats ; 'tis a good round sum.
Three months from twelve ; then, let me see, the
rate —

Ant. Well, Shylock, shall we be beholding to you ?

Shy. Signior Antonio, many a time and oft 100
In the Rialto you have rated me
About my moneys and my usances ;
Still have I borne it with a patient shrug,
For suffrance is the badge of all our tribe.
You call me misbeliever, cut-throat dog, 105
And spit upon my Jewish gaberdine,
And all for use of that which is mine own.
Well then, it now appears you need my help ;
Go to, then ; you come to me, and you say
Shylock, we would have moneys. You say so ; 110
You, that did void your rheum upon my beard,
And foot me as you spurn a stranger cur
Over your threshold ; moneys is your suit.
What should I say to you ? Should I not say

Hath a dog money? Is it possible 115
A cur can lend three thousand ducats? or
 Shall I bend low and in a bondman's key,
 With bated breath and whispering humbleness,
 Say this: *Fair sir, you spit on me on Wednesday last;*
You spurned me such a day; another time 120
You called me dog; and for these courtesies
I'll lend you thus much moneys?

Ant. I am as like to call thee so again,
 To spit on thee again, to spurn thee too.
 If thou wilt lend this money, lend it not 125
 As to thy friends; for when did friendship take
 A breed for barren metal of his friend?
 But lend it rather to thine enemy,
 Who if he break, thou mayest with better face
 Exact the penalty.

Shy. Why, look you, how you storm! 130
 I would be friends with you, and have your love,
 Forget the shames that you have stained me with,
 Supply your present wants, and take no doit
 Of usance for my moneys, and you'll not hear me.
 This is kind I offer. 135

Bass. This were kindness.

Shy. This kindness will I show.
 Go with me to a notary, seal me there
 Your single bond; and, in a merry sport,
 If you repay me not on such a day,
 In such a place, such sum or sums as are 140
 Expressed in the condition, let the forfeit
 Be nominated for an equal pound
 Of your fair flesh, to be cut off and taken
 In what part of your body it pleaseth me.

Ant. Content, in faith ; I'll seal to such a bond,
And say there is much kindness in the Jew. 145

Bass. You shall not seal to such a bond for me ;
I'll rather dwell in my necessity.

Ant. Why, fear not, man ; I will not forfeit it.
Within these two months, — that's a month before 150
This bond expires, — I do expect return
Of thrice three times the value of this bond.

Shy. O father Abram, what these Christians are,
Whose own hard dealings teaches them suspect
The thoughts of others ! Pray you, tell me this : 155
If he should break his day, what should I gain
By the exaction of the forfeiture ?

A pound of man's flesh taken from a man
Is not so estimable, profitable neither,
As flesh of muttons, beefs, or goats. I say, 160
To buy his favor, I extend this friendship.
If he will take it, so ; if not, adieu ;
And, for my love, I pray you wrong me not.

Ant. Yes, Shylock, I will seal unto this bond.

Shy. Then meet me forthwith at the notary's ; 165
Give him direction for this merry bond ;
And I will go and purse the ducats straight ;
See to my house, left in the fearful guard
Of an unthrifty knave ; and presently
I will be with you.

Ant. Hie thee, gentle Jew. [*Exit SHYLOCK.* 170
The Hebrew will turn Christian ; he grows kind.

Bass. I like not fair terms and a villain's mind.

Ant. Come on. In this there can be no dismay ;
My ships come home a month before the day.

[*Exeunt.*

Act Second

Scene I

Belmont. A Room in Portia's House.

Enter MOROCCO, a tawny Moor all in white, and three or four followers accordingly; with PORTIA, NERISSA, and their trains. Flourish of cornets.

Morocco. Mislike me not for my complexion,
The shadowed livery of the burnished sun,
To whom I am a neighbor and near bred.
Bring me the fairest creature northward born,
Where Phœbus' fire scarce thaws the icicles, 5
And let us make incision for your love,
To prove whose blood is reddest, his or mine.
I tell thee, lady, this aspect of mine
Hath feared the valiant; by my love, I swear,
The best-regarded virgins of our clime 10
Have loved it too. I would not change this hue,
Except to steal your thoughts, my gentle queen.

Portia. In terms of choice I am not solely led
By nice direction of a maiden's eyes;
Besides, the lottery of my destiny 15
Bars me the right of voluntary choosing;
But if my father had not scanted me
And hedged me by his wit, to yield myself
His wife who wins me by that means I told you,

Yourself, renownèd Prince, then stood as fair 20
 As any comer I have looked on yet
 For my affection.

Mor. Even for that I thank you :
Therefore, I pray you lead me to the caskets,
To try my fortune. By this scimitar,
That slew the Sophy and a Persian prince 25
That won three fields of Sultan Solyman,
I would o'erstare the sternest eyes that look,
Outbrave the heart most daring on the earth,
Pluck the young sucking cubs from the she-bear,
Yea, mock the lion when he roars for prey, 30
To win thee, lady. But, alas the while!
If Hercules and Lichas play at dice
Which is the better man, the greater throw
May turn by fortune from the weaker hand ;
So is Alcides beaten by his page ; 35
And so may I, blind Fortune leading me,
Miss that which one unworthier may attain,
And die with grieving.

Por. You must take your chance
And either not attempt to choose at all,
Or swear before you choose, if you choose wrong, 40
Never to speak to lady afterward
In way of marriage; therefore be advised.

Mor. Nor will not. Come, bring me unto my chance.

Por. First, forward to the temple ; after dinner
Your hazard shall be made.

Mor. Good fortune then, 45
To make me blest or curs'd'st among men !

[*Cornets, and exeunt.*]

Scene II

*Venice. A Street.**Enter LAUNCELOT.*

Launcelot. Certainly my conscience will serve me to run from this Jew, my master. The fiend is at mine elbow, and tempts me, saying to me, "*Gobbo, Launcelot Gobbo, good Launcelot,*" or "*good Gobbo,*" or "*good Launcelot Gobbo, use your legs, take the start, run away.*" 5

My conscience says, "*No; take heed, honest Launcelot; take heed, honest Gobbo,*" or, as aforesaid, "*honest Launcelot Gobbo; do not run; scorn running with thy heels.*" Well, the most courageous fiend bids me pack; "*Via!*" says the fiend; "*away!*" says the fiend; "*for the heavens, rouse up a brave mind,*" says the fiend, "*and run.*" Well, my conscience, hanging about the neck of my heart, says very wisely to me, "*My honest friend Launcelot,*" being an honest man's son, or rather an honest woman's son, — for, indeed, 15

my father did something smack, something grow to, he had a kind of taste; — well, my conscience says, "*Launcelot, budge not.*" "*Budge,*" says the fiend; "*budge not,*" says my conscience. "*Conscience,*" say I, "*you counsel well;*" "*Fiend,*" say I, "*you 20*

counsel well." To be ruled by my conscience, I should stay with the Jew, my master, who, God bless the mark, is a kind of devil; and, to run away from the Jew, I should be ruled by the fiend, who, saving your reverence, is the devil himself. Certainly the 25

Jew is the very devil incarnation; and, in my conscience, my conscience is but a kind of hard con-

science, to offer to counsel me to stay with the Jew.
 The fiend gives the more friendly counsel : I will run,
 fiend ; my heels are at your commandment ; I will 30
 run.

Enter OLD GOBBO, with a basket.

Gobbo. Master young-man, you, I pray you, which is the
 way to Master Jew's ?

Laun. [*Aside*] O heavens, this is my true-begotten
 father ! who, being more than sand-blind, high- 35
 gravel blind, knows me not ; I will try confusions
 with him.

Gob. Master young gentleman, I pray you, which is the
 way to Master Jew's ?

Laun. Turn up on your right hand at the next turning, 40
 but, at the next turning of all, on your left ; marry,
 at the very next turning, turn of no hand, but turn
 down indirectly to the Jew's house.

Gob. By God's sonties, 'twill be a hard way to hit. Can
 you tell me whether one Launcelot that dwells with 45
 him, dwell with him or no ?

Laun. Talk you of young Master Launcelot ? [*Aside*]
 Mark me now ; now will I raise the waters. Talk
 you of young Master Launcelot ?

Gob. No Master, sir, but a poor man's son ; his father, 50
 though I say it, is an honest exceeding poor man,
 and, God be thanked, well to live.

Laun. Well, let his father be what a' will, we talk of
 young Master Launcelot.

Gob. Your worship's friend and Launcelot, sir. 55

Laun. But I pray you, ergo, old man, ergo, I beseech you,
 talk you of young Master Launcelot ?

Gob. Of Launcelot, an't please your mastership.

Laun. Ergo, Master Launcelot. Talk not of Master Launcelot, father; for the young gentleman, according to Fates and Destinies and such odd sayings, the Sisters Three and such branches of learning, is indeed deceased; or, as you would say in plain terms, gone to heaven. 60

Gob. Marry, God forbid! the boy was the very staff of my age, my very prop. 65

Laun. Do I look like a cudgel or a hovel-post, a staff or a prop? Do you know me, father?

Gob. Alack the day, I know you not, young gentleman: but, I pray you, tell me, is my boy, God rest his soul, alive or dead? 70

Laun. Do you not know me, father?

Gob. Alack, sir, I am sand-blind; I know you not.

Laun. Nay, indeed, if you had your eyes, you might fail of the knowing me; it is a wise father that knows his own child. Well, old man, I will tell you news of your son; give me your blessing; truth will come to light; murder cannot be hid long; a man's son may; but, in the end, truth will out. 75

Gob. Pray you, sir, stand up; I am sure you are not Launcelot, my boy. 80

Laun. Pray you, let's have no more fooling about it, but give me your blessing. I am Launcelot, your boy that was, your son that is, your child that shall be. 85

Gob. I cannot think you are my son.

Laun. I know not what I shall think of that; but I am Launcelot, the Jew's man; and I am sure Margery your wife is my mother.

Gob. Her name is Margery, indeed; I'll be sworn, if 90
thou be Launcelot, thou art mine own flesh and
blood. Lord worshipped might he be! what a beard
hast thou got! thou hast got more hair on thy chin
than Dobbin my fill-horse has on his tail.

Laun. It should seem, then, that Dobbin's tail grows 95
backward. I am sure he had more hair of his tail
than I have of my face when I last saw him.

Gob. Lord, how art thou changed! How dost thou and
thy master agree? I have brought him a present.
How 'gree you now? 100

Laun. Well, well; but, for mine own part, as I have set
up my rest to run away, so I will not rest till I have
run some ground. My master's a very Jew; give
him a present! give him a halter. I am famished
in his service; you may tell every finger I have with 105
my ribs. Father, I am glad you are come; give
me your present to one Master Bassanio, who, in-
deed, gives rare new liveries. If I serve not him, I
will run as far as God has any ground. O rare for-
tune! here comes the man; to him, father, for I am 110
a Jew, if I serve the Jew any longer.

Enter BASSANIO, with LEONARDO and other Followers.

Bassanio. You may do so; but let it be so hasted, that
supper be ready at the farthest by five of the clock;
see these letters delivered; put the liveries to mak-
ing; and desire Gratiano to come anon to my lodg- 115
ing. *[Exit a Servant.]*

Laun. To him, father.

Gob. God bless your worship!

Bass. Gramercy! wouldst thou aught with me?

Gob. Here's my son, sir, a poor boy, —

Laun. Not a poor boy, sir, but the rich Jew's man; that would, sir, — as my father shall specify, —

Gob. He hath a great infection, sir, as one would say, to serve —

Laun. Indeed, the short and the long is, I serve the Jew, 125
and have a desire, — as my father shall specify, —

Gob. His master and he, saving your worship's reverence, are scarce cater-cousins, —

Laun. To be brief, the very truth is that the Jew, having done me wrong, doth cause me, — as my father, 130
being, I hope, an old man, shall frutify unto you, —

Gob. I have here a dish of doves that I would bestow upon your worship, and my suit is —

Laun. In very brief, the suit is impertinent to myself, as your worship shall know by this honest old man, 135
and, though I say it, though old man, yet poor man, my father.

Bass. One speak for both. What would you?

Laun. Serve you, sir.

Gob. That is the very defect of the matter, sir. 140

Bass. I know thee well; thou hast obtained thy suit.

Shylock thy master spoke with me this day,
And hath preferred thee, if it be preferment
To leave a rich Jew's service, to become
The follower of so poor a gentleman. 145

Laun. The old proverb is very well parted between my master Shylock and you, sir: you have the grace of God, sir, and he hath enough.

Bass. Thou speak'st it well. Go, father, with thy son;
Take leave of thy old master, and inquire 150
My lodging out. Give him a livery
More guarded than his fellows'; see it done.

Laun. Father, in. I cannot get a service, no ; I have
ne'er a tongue in my head, well ! If any man in Italy
have a fairer table which doth offer to swear upon a 155
book, I shall have good fortune ! Go to, here's a
simple line of life ; here's a small trifle of wives ; alas,
fifteen wives is nothing ! aleven widows and nine
maids is a simple coming-in for one man ; and then
to 'scape drowning thrice, and to be in peril of my 160
life with the edge of a feather-bed ; — here are sim-
ple scapes. Well, if Fortune be a woman, she's
a good wench for this gear. Father, come ; I'll take
my leave of the Jew in the twinkling of an eye.

[*Exeunt* LAUNCELOT and OLD GOBBO.]

Bass. I pray thee, good Leonardo, think on this : 165
These things being bought and orderly bestowed,
Return in haste, for I do feast to-night
My best-esteemed acquaintance ; hie thee, go.
Leonardo. My best endeavors shall be done herein.

Enter GRATIANO.

Gratiano. Where is your master ?

Leon. Yonder, sir, he walks. [*Exit.* 170

Gra. Signior Bassanio, —

Bass. Gratiano !

Gra. I have a suit to you.

Bass. You have obtained it.

Gra. You must not deny me ; I must go with you to
Belmont. 175

Bass. Why, then you must. But hear thee, Gratiano ;
Thou art too wild, too rude, and bold of voice, —
Parts that become thee happily enough,
And in such eyes as ours appear not faults ;

But where thou art not known, why there they show 180
 Something too liberal. Pray thee, take pain
 To allay with some cold drops of modesty
 Thy skipping spirit, lest through thy wild behavior
 I be misconstrued in the place I go to,
 And lose my hopes.

Gra. Signior Bassanio, hear me. 185
 If I do not put on a sober habit,
 Talk with respect, and swear but now and then,
 Wear prayer-books in my pocket, look demurely,
 Nay more, while grace is saying, hood mine eyes
 Thus with my hat, and sigh, and say "*Amen*," 190
 Use all the observance of civility,
 Like one well studied in a sad ostent
 To please his grandam, never trust me more.

Bass. Well, we shall see your bearing.

Gra. Nay, but I bar to-night; you shall not gauge me 195
 By what we do to-night.

Bass. No, that were pity;
 I would entreat you rather to put on
 Your boldest suit of mirth, for we have friends
 That purpose merriment. But fare you well;
 I have some business. 200

Gra. And I must to Lorenzo and the rest;
 But we will visit you at supper-time. [*Exeunt.*]

Scene III

The Same. A Room in Shylock's House.

Enter JESSICA and LAUNCELOT.

Jessica. I am sorry thou wilt leave my father so;
 Our house is hell, and thou, a merry devil,

Didst rob it of some taste of tediousness.

But fare thee well; there is a ducat for thee.

And, Launcelot, soon at supper shalt thou see 5

Lorenzo, who is thy new master's guest;

Give him this letter; do it secretly.

And so farewell; I would not have my father

See me in talk with thee.

Laun. Adieu! tears exhibit my tongue. Most beauti- 10
ful pagan, most sweet Jew! But adieu, — these
foolish drops do something drown my manly spirit.
Adieu.

Jes. Farewell, good Launcelot. [*Exit LAUNCELOT.* 15

Alack, what heinous sin is it in me

To be ashamed to be my father's child!

But though I am a daughter to his blood,

I am not to his manners. O Lorenzo,

If thou keep promise, I shall end this strife,

Become a Christian and thy loving wife. [*Exit.* 20

Scene IV

The Same. A Street.

Enter GRATIANO, LORENZO, SALARINO, and SALANIO.

Lorenzo. Nay, we will slink away in supper-time,

Disguise us at my lodging, and return

All in an hour.

Gratiano. We have not made good preparation.

Salarino. We have not spoke us yet of torch-bearers. 5

Salanio. 'Tis vile, unless it may be quaintly ordered,

And better in my mind not undertook.

Lor. 'Tis now but four o'clock: we have two hours

To furnish us.

Enter LAUNCELOT with a letter.

Friend Launcelot, what's the news?

Launcelot. And it shall please you to break up this, it shall seem to signify. 10

Lor. I know the hand; — in faith, 'tis a fair hand;
And whiter than the paper it writ on
Is the fair hand that writ.

Gra. Love-news, in faith.

Laun. By your leave, sir. 15

Lor. Whither goest thou?

Laun. Marry, sir, to bid my old master the Jew to sup to-night with my new master the Christian.

Lor. Hold here, take this; tell gentle Jessica
I will not fail her; speak it privately. 20

Go, gentlemen, [*Exit LAUNCELOT.*]

Will you prepare you for this masque to-night?

I am provided of a torch-bearer.

Salar. Ay, marry, I'll begone about it straight.

Salan. And so will I.

Lor. Meet me and Gratiano
At Gratiano's lodging some hour hence. 25

Salar. 'Tis good we do so.

[*Exeunt SALARINO and SALANIO.*]

Gra. Was not that letter from fair Jessica?

Lor. I must needs tell thee all. She hath directed
How I shall take her from her father's house; 30

What gold and jewels she is furnished with;

What page's suit she hath in readiness.

If e'er the Jew her father come to heaven,

It will be for his gentle daughter's sake;

And never dare misfortune cross her foot, 35

Unless she do it under this excuse,
That she is issue to a faithless Jew.
Come, go with me ; peruse this as thou goest ;
Fair Jessica shall be my torch-bearer. [Exeunt.

Scene V

The Same. Before Shylock's House.

Enter SHYLOCK and LAUNCELOT.

Shylock. Well, thou shalt see, thy eyes shall be thy
judge,

The difference of old Shylock and Bassanio : —
What, Jessica ! — thou shalt not gormandise,
As thou hast done with me : — What, Jessica ! —
And sleep and snore, and rend apparel out ; — 5
Why, Jessica, I say !

Launcelot. Why, Jessica !

Shy. Who bids thee call ? I do not bid thee call.

Laun. Your worship was wont to tell me that I could
do nothing without bidding.

Enter JESSICA.

Jessica. Call you ? what is your will ? 10

Shy. I am bid forth to supper, Jessica ;

There are my keys. — But wherefore should I go ?

I am not bid for love ; they flatter me.

But yet I'll go in hate, to feed upon

The prodigal Christian. — Jessica, my girl, 15

Look to my house. — I am right loath to go ;

There is some ill a-brewing towards my rest,

For I did dream of money-bags to-night.

Laun. I beseech you, sir, go; my young master doth expect your reproach. 20

Shy. So do I his.

Laun. And they have conspired together, I will not say you shall see a masque; but if you do, then it was not for nothing that my nose fell a-bleeding on Black Monday last at six o'clock i' the morning, falling out that year on Ash-Wednesday was four year, in the afternoon. 25

Shy. What, are there masques? Hear you me, Jessica, Lock up my doors; and when you hear the drum And the vile squealing of the wry-necked fife, 30 Clamber not you up to the casements then, Nor thrust your head into the public street To gaze on Christian fools with varnished faces; But stop my house's ears, I mean my casements, Let not the sound of shallow foppery enter 35 My sober house. By Jacob's staff, I swear I have no mind of feasting forth to-night; But I will go. Go you before me, sirrah; Say I will come.

Laun. I will go before, sir. Mistress, look out at window, for all this; 40

There will come a Christian by,

Will be worth a Jew's eye. [Exit.

Shy. What says that fool of Hagar's offspring, ha?

Jes. His words were, "*Farewell, mistress;*" nothing else. 45

Shy. The patch is kind enough, but a huge feeder; Snail-slow in profit, and he sleeps by day More than the wild-cat. Drones hive not with me; Therefore I part with him; and part with him

To one that I would have him help to waste 50

His borrowed purse. Well, Jessica, go in ;

Perhaps I will return immediately.

Do as I bid you ; shut doors after you.

Fast bind, fast find, —

A proverb never stale in thrifty mind. [Exit. 55

Jes. Farewell ; and if my fortune be not crossed,

I have a father, you a daughter, lost. [Exit.

Scene VI

The Same.

Enter the Maskers, GRATIANO and SALARINO.

Gratiano. This is the pent-house under which Lorenzo
Desired us to make stand.

Salarino. His hour is almost past.

Gra. And it is marvel he out-dwells his hour,
For lovers ever run before the clock.

Salar. O, ten times faster Venus' pigeons fly 5
To seal love's bonds new-made, than they are wont
To keep obliged faith forfeited !

Gra. That ever holds. Who riseth from a feast
With that keen appetite that he sits down ?
Where is the horse that doth untread again 10
His tedious measures with the unbated fire
That he did pace them first ? All things that are,
Are with more spirit chasèd than enjoyed.

How like a youngster or a prodigal
The scarfèd bark puts from her native bay, 15
Hugged and embracèd by the strumpet wind !
How like the prodigal doth she return,

With over-weathered ribs and ragged sails,
Lean, rent, and beggared by the strumpet wind!
Salar. Here comes Lorenzo; more of this hereafter. 20

Enter LORENZO

Lorenzo. Sweet friends, your patience for my long abode;
Not I, but my affairs, have made you wait.
When you shall please to play the thieves for wives,
I'll watch as long for you then. Approach;
Here dwells my father Jew. Ho! who's within? 25

Enter JESSICA, above, in page's clothes.

Jessica. Who are you? Tell me, for more certainty,
Albeit I'll swear that I do know your tongue.

Lor. Lorenzo, and thy love.

Jes. Lorenzo, certain, and my love, indeed,
For who love I so much? and now who knows 30
But you, Lorenzo, whether I am yours?

Lor. Heaven and thy thoughts are witness that thou
art.

Jes. Here, catch this casket; it is worth the pains.
I am glad 'tis night, you do not look on me,
For I am much ashamed of my exchange. 35
But love is blind, and lovers cannot see
The pretty follies that themselves commit;
For if they could, Cupid himself would blush
To see me thus transformèd to a boy.

Lor. Descend, for you must be my torch-bearer. 40

Jes. What, must I hold a candle to my shames?
They in themselves, good sooth, are too too light.
Why, 'tis an office of discovery, love,
And I should be obscured.

Lor. So are you, sweet,
Even in the lovely garnish of a boy. But come at
once; 45
For the close night doth play the runaway,
And we are stayed for at Bassanio's feast.
Jes. I will make fast the doors, and gild myself
With some moe ducats, and be with you straight.

[Exit above.]

Gra. Now, by my hood, a Gentile, and no Jew. 50
Lor. Beshrew me but I love her heartily;
For she is wise, if I can judge of her;
And fair she is, if that mine eyes be true;
And true she is, as she hath proved herself;
And therefore, like herself, wise, fair, and true, 55
Shall she be placèd in my constant soul.

Enter JESSICA, below.

What, art thou come? On, gentlemen; away!
Our masquing mates by this time for us stay.

[Exit with JESSICA and SALARINO]

Enter ANTONIO.

Antonio. Who's there?
Gra. Signior Antonio! 60
Ant. Fie, fie, Gratiano; where are all the rest?
'Tis nine o'clock; our friends all stay for you.
No masque to-night; the wind is come about;
Bassanio presently will go aboard.
I have sent twenty out to seek for you. 65
Gra. I am glad on't; I desire no more delight
Than to be under sail and gone to-night. *[Exeunt.]*

Scene VII

Belmont. A Room in Portia's House.

Flourish of cornets. Enter PORTIA, with the PRINCE OF MOROCCO, and both their trains.

Portia. Go, draw aside the curtains, and discover
The several caskets to this noble Prince.
Now make your choice.

Morocco. The first, of gold, who this inscription bears,
"Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire;" 5
The second, silver, which this promise carries,
"Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves;"
This third, dull lead, with warning all as blunt,
"Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath."
How shall I know if I do choose the right? 10

Por. The one of them contains my picture, Prince:
If you choose that, then I am yours withal.

Mor. Some god direct my judgment! Let me see;
I will survey the inscriptions back again.
What says this leaden casket? 15
"Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath."
Must give, — for what? for lead? — hazard for lead?
This casket threatens. Men that hazard all
Do it in hope of fair advantages.
A golden mind stoops not to shows of dross; 20
I'll then nor give nor hazard aught for lead.
What says the silver with her virgin hue?
"Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves."
As much as he deserves! Pause there, Morocco,
And weigh thy value with an even hand. — 25
If thou be'st rated by thy estimation,

Thou dost deserve enough ; and yet enough
May not extend so far as to the lady ;
And yet to be afeared of my deserving
Were but a weak disabling of myself. — 30
As much as I deserve ! — Why, that's the lady.
I do in birth deserve her, and in fortunes,
In graces and in qualities of breeding ;
But more than these, in love I do deserve.
What if I strayed no further, but chose here ? 35
Let's see once more this saying graved in gold :
“ *Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire.* ”
— Why, that's the lady. All the world desires her ;
From the four corners of the earth they come,
To kiss this shrine, this mortal-breathing saint : 40
The Hyrcanian deserts and the vasty wilds
Of wide Arabia are as thoroughfares now
For Princes to come view fair Portia ;
The watery kingdom, whose ambitious head
Spits in the face of heaven, is no bar 45
To stop the foreign spirits ; but they come,
As o'er a brook, to see fair Portia. —
One of these three contains her heavenly picture.
Is't like that lead contains her ? 'Twere damnation
To think so base a thought ; it were too gross 50
To rib her cerecloth in the obscure grave.
Or shall I think in silver she's immured,
Being ten times undervalued to tried gold ?
O sinful thought ! Never so rich a gem
Was set in worse than gold. They have in England 55
A coin that bears the figure of an angel
Stamped in gold, but that's insculped upon ;
But here an angel in a golden bed

Lies all within. Deliver me the key :

Here do I choose, and thrive I as I may !

60

Por. There, take it, Prince ; and if my form lie there,

Then I am yours. [*He unlocks the golden casket*

Mor. O hell ! what have we here ?

A carrion death, within whose empty eye

There is a written scroll ! I'll read the writing. —

[*Reads*]

"All that glisters is not gold,

65

Often have you heard that told ;

Many a man his life hath sold

But my outside to behold ;

Gilded tombs do worms infold.

Had you been as wise as bold,

70

Young in limbs, in judgment old,

Your answer had not been inscrolled,

Fare you well ; your suit is cold."

Cold, indeed, and labor lost ;

Then, farewell, heat, and welcome, frost !

75

Portia, adieu. I have too grieved a heart

To take a tedious leave ; thus losers part.

[*Exit with his train. Flourish of cornets.*

Por. A gentle riddance. Draw the curtains, go.

Let all of his complexion choose me so. [*Exeunt.*

Scene VIII

Venice. A Street.

Enter SALARINO and SALANIO.

Salarino. Why, man, I saw Bassanio under sail ;

With him is Gratiano gone along ;

And in their ship I am sure Lorenzo is not.

Salanio. The villain Jew with outcries raised the Duke,

Who went with him to search Bassanio's ship.

5

Salar. He came too late, the ship was under sail ;
 But there the Duke was given to understand
 That in a gondola were seen together
 Lorenzo and his amorous Jessica.

Besides, Antonio certified the Duke
 They were not with Bassanio in his ship. 10

Salan. I never heard a passion so confused,
 So strange, outrageous, and so variable,
 As the dog Jew did utter in the streets :
 “ *My daughter! O my ducats! O my daughter!*
Fled with a Christian! O my Christian ducats!
Justice! the law! my ducats, and my daughter!
A sealed bag, two sealed bags of ducats,
Of double ducats, stolen from me by my daughter!
And jewels, two stones, two rich and precious stones,
Stolen by my daughter! Justice! find the girl!
She hath the stones upon her, and the ducats!” 15

Salar. Why, all the boys in Venice follow him,
 Crying, his stones, his daughter, and his ducats.

Salan. Let good Antonio look he keep his day,
 Or he shall pay for this. 25

Salar. Marry, well remembered.

I reasoned with a Frenchman yesterday,
 Who told me, in the narrow seas that part
 The French and English, there miscarried
 A vessel of our country richly fraught. 30
 I thought upon Antonio when he told me ;
 And wished in silence that it were not his.

Salan. You were best to tell Antonio what you hear ;
 Yet do not suddenly, for it may grieve him.

Salar. A kinder gentleman treads not the earth.
 I saw Bassanio and Antonio part. 35

Bassanio told him he would make some speed
 Of his return ; he answered : “ *Do not so ;
 Slubber not business for my sake, Bassanio,
 But stay the very riping of the time ;* 40
*And for the Jew’s bond which he hath of me,
 Let it not enter in your mind of love.*

*Be merry ; and employ your chiefest thoughts
 To courtship, and such fair ostents of love
 As shall conveniently become you there.”* 45

And even there, his eye being big with tears,
 Turning his face, he put his hand behind him,
 And with affection wondrous sensible
 He wrung Bassanio’s hand ; and so they parted.

Salan. I think he only loves the world for him. 50
 I pray thee, let us go and find him out,
 And quicken his embracèd heaviness
 With some delight or other.

Salar. Do we so. [*Exeunt.*]

Scene IX

Belmont. A Room in PORTIA’S House.

Enter NERISSA and a Servitor.

Nerissa. Quick, quick, I pray thee ; draw the curtain
 straight.

The Prince of Arragon hath ta’en his oath,
 And comes to his election presently.

*Flourish of cornets. Enter the PRINCE OF ARRAGON,
 PORTIA, and their trains.*

Portia. Behold, there stand the caskets, noble Prince :
 If you choose that wherein I am contained, 5

Straight shall our nuptial rites be solemnised ;
But if you fail, without more speech, my lord,
You must be gone from hence immediately.

Arragon. I am enjoined by oath to observe three things :

First, never to unfold to any one 10
Which casket 'twas I chose ; next, if I fail
Of the right casket, never in my life
To woo a maid in way of marriage ;
Lastly, if I do fail in fortune of my choice,
Immediately to leave you and be gone. 15

Por. To these injunctions every one doth swear
That comes to hazard for my worthless self.

Arra. And so I have addressed me. Fortune now
To my heart's hope ! Gold, — silver, — and base
lead.

“Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath.” 20
You shall look fairer, ere I give or hazard.

What says the golden chest ? ha ! let me see :

“Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire.”
What many men desire ! that “*many*” may be
meant

By the fool multitude, that choose by show, 25
Not learning more than the fond eye doth teach, —
Which pries not to th' interior, but, like the martlet,
Builds in the weather on the outward wall,
Even in the force and road of casualty.

I will not choose what many men desire, 30
Because I will not jump with common spirits,
And rank me with the barbarous multitudes.

Why, then to thee, thou silver treasure-house,
Tell me once more what title thou dost bear :

“Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.” 35

And well said too; for who should go about
 To cozen fortune, and be honorable
 Without the stamp of merit? Let none presume
 To wear an undeservèd dignity.

O that estates, degrees and offices 40

Were not derived corruptly, and that clear honor
 Were purchased by the merit of the wearer!

How many then should cover that stand bare!

How many be commanded that command!

How much low peasantry would then be gleaned 45

From the true seed of honor! and how much honor

Picked from the chaff and ruin of the times

To be new garnished! Well, but to my choice —

"Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves."

I will assume desert. Give me a key for this, 50

And instantly unlock my fortunes here.

[He opens the silver casket.]

Por. *[Aside]* Too long a pause for that which you find
 there.

Arra. What's here? — the portrait of a blinking idiot,
 Presenting me a schedule! I will read it.

How much unlike art thou to Portia! 55

How much unlike my hopes and my deservings!

"Who chooseth me shall have as much as he deserves."

Did I deserve no more than a fool's head?

Is that my prize? are my deserts no better?

Por. To offend and judge are distinct offices, 60

And of opposèd natures.

Arra. What is here? —

[Reads]

*"The fire seven times tried this;
 Seven times tried that judgment is*

*That did never choose amiss.
Some there be that shadows kiss;
Such have but a shadow's bliss.
There be fools alive, iwis,
Silvered o'er: and so was this.
Take what wife you will to bed,
I will ever be your head.
So be gone; you are sped."*

65
70

Still more fool I shall appear

By the time I linger here.

With one fool's head I came to woo,

But I go away with two.

Sweet, adieu. I'll keep my oath,

Patiently to bear my wroth.

[*Exeunt* ARRAGON *and* *train*.]

Por. Thus hath the candle singed the moth.

O, these deliberate fools! when they do choose,

They have the wisdom by their wit to lose.

Ner. The ancient saying is no heresy,

Hanging and wiving goes by destiny.

Por. Come, draw the curtain, Nerissa.

Enter a Servant.

Servant. Where is my lady?

Por. Here: what would my lord?

Serv. Madam, there is alighted at your gate

A young Venetian, one that comes before

To signify the approaching of his lord,

From whom he bringeth sensible regrets;

To wit, besides commends and courteous breath,

Gifts of rich value; yet I have not seen

So likely an ambassador of love.

A day in April never came so sweet,

75

80

85

90

To show how costly summer was at hand,
As this fore-spurrer comes before his lord.

Por. No more, I pray thee ; I am half afeared 95

Thou'lt say anon he is some kin to thee,
Thou spend'st such high-day wit in praising him.
Come, come, Nerissa ; for I long to see
Quick Cupid's post that comes so mannerly.

Ner. Bassanio, Lord Love, if thy will it be ! [*Exeunt.* 100

Act Third

Scene I

Venice. A Street.

Enter SALANIO and SALARINO.

Salanio. Now, what news on the Rialto?

Salarino. Why, yet it lives there unchecked, that Antonio hath a ship of rich lading wrecked on the narrow seas, — the Goodwins, I think they call the place; a very dangerous flat, and fatal, where the carcasses of many a tall ship lie buried, as they say, if my gossip Report be an honest woman of her word. 5

Salan. I would she were as lying a gossip in that as ever knapped ginger, or made her neighbors believe she wept for the death of a third husband. But it is true, without any slips of prolixity, or crossing the plain highway of talk, that the good Antonio, the honest Antonio, — O that I had a title good enough to keep his name company! — 10

Salar. Come, the full stop. 15

Salan. Ha! what sayest thou? Why, the end is, he hath lost a ship.

Salar. I would it might prove the end of his losses.

Salan. Let me say "amen" betimes, lest the devil cross my prayer, for here he comes in the likeness of a Jew. 20

Enter SHYLOCK.

How now, Shylock! What news among the merchants?

Shylock. You knew, none so well, none so well as you, of my daughter's flight.

Salar. That's certain. I, for my part, knew the tailor 25
that made the wings she flew withal.

Salan. And Shylock, for his own part, knew the bird was
fledged; and then it is the complexion of them all to
leave the dam.

Shy. She is damned for it. 30

Salar. That's certain, if the devil may be her judge.

Shy. My own flesh and blood to rebel!

Salan. Out upon it, old carrion! rebels it at these years?

Shy. I say, my daughter is my flesh and blood.

Salar. There is more difference between thy flesh and 35
hers than between jet and ivory; — more between
your bloods than there is between red wine and
Rhenish. But tell us, do you hear whether Antonio
have had any loss at sea or no?

Shy. There I have another bad match; — a bankrupt, 40
a prodigal, who dare scarce show his head on the
Rialto; — a beggar, that was used to come so smug
upon the mart; let him look to his bond. He was
wont to call me usurer; let him look to his bond.
He was wont to lend money for a Christian courtesy; 45
let him look to his bond.

Salar. Why, I am sure, if he forfeit, thou wilt not take
his flesh; what's that good for?

Shy. To bait fish withal. If it will feed nothing else, it 50
will feed my revenge. He hath disgraced me, and
hindered me half a million; laughed at my losses,

mocked at my gains, scorned my nation, thwarted my bargains, cooled my friends, heated mine enemies; and what's his reason? — *I am a Jew*. Hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands, organs, 55 dimensions, senses, affections, passions? fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? 60 if you tickle us, do we not laugh? if you poison us, do we not die? and if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that. If a Jew wrong a Christian, what is his humility? Revenge. If a Christian 65 wrong a Jew, what should his sufferance be by Christian example? Why, revenge. The villany you teach me, I will execute; and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction.

Enter a Servant.

Servant. Gentlemen, my master Antonio is at his house, 70 and desires to speak with you both.

Salar. We have been up and down to seek him.

Enter TUBAL.

Salan. Here comes another of the tribe. A third cannot be matched, unless the devil himself turn Jew.

[Exeunt SALANIO, SALARINO, with Servant.]

Shy. How now, Tubal! what news from Genoa? Hast 75 thou found my daughter?

Tubal. I often came where I did hear of her, but cannot find her.

Shy. Why, there, there, there, there! a diamond gone,

cost me two thousand ducats in Frankfort! The 80
curse never fell upon our nation till now; I never
felt it till now. Two thousand ducats in that; and
other precious, precious jewels. I would my daugh-
ter were dead at my foot, and the jewels in her ear! 85
would she were hearsed at my foot, and the ducats
in her coffin! No news of them? — why, so! and
I know not what's spent in the search. Why, thou
loss upon loss! The thief gone with so much, and so
much to find the thief; and no satisfaction, no re- 90
venge; nor no ill luck stirring but what lights on my
shoulders; no sighs but of my breathing; no tears
but of my shedding.

Tub. Yes, other men have ill luck too. Antonio, as I
heard in Genoa, —

Shy. What, what, what? ill luck, ill luck? 95

Tub. — hath an argosy cast away, coming from Tripolis.

Shy. I thank God, I thank God! Is't true, is't true?

Tub. I spoke with some of the sailors that escaped the
wreck.

Shy. I thank thee, good Tubal; good news, good news! 100
ha, ha! here? — in Genoa?

Tub. Your daughter spent in Genoa, as I heard, in one
night fourscore ducats.

Shy. Thou stick'st a dagger in me. I shall never see my
gold again! — Fourscore ducats at a sitting! four- 105
score ducats!

Tub. There came divers of Antonio's creditors in my
company to Venice, that swear he cannot choose but
break.

Shy. I am very glad of it; I'll plague him; I'll torture 110
him; I am glad of it.

Tub. One of them showed me a ring that he had of your daughter for a monkey.

Shy. Out upon her! Thou torturest me, Tubal; it was my turquoise. I had it of Leah when I was a bachelor; I would not have given it for a wilderness of monkeys. 115

Tub. But Antonio is certainly undone.

Shy. Nay, that's true, that's very true. Go, Tubal, fee me an officer; bespeak him a fortnight before. I will have the heart of him, if he forfeit; for, were he out of Venice, I can make what merchandise I will. 120
Go, go, Tubal, and meet me at our synagogue; go, good Tubal; — at our synagogue, Tubal. [*Exeunt.*]

Scene II

Belmont. A Room in PORTIA'S House.

Enter BASSANIO, PORTIA, GRATIANO, NERISSA, and all their trains.

Portia. I pray you, tarry; pause a day or two
Before you hazard; for, in choosing wrong,
I lose your company; therefore forbear awhile.
There's something tells me — but it is not love —
I would not lose you; and you know yourself, 5
Hate counsels not in such a quality.
But lest you should not understand me well, —
And yet a maiden hath no tongue but thought, —
I would detain you here some month or two
Before you venture for me. I could teach you 10
How to choose right, but I am then forsworn;
So will I never be; so may you miss me;
But if you do, you'll make me wish a sin,

That I had been forsworn. · Beshrew your eyes,
 They have o'er-looked me, and divided me ; 15
 One half of me is yours, the other half yours, —
 Mine own, I would say ; but if mine, then yours,
 And so all yours ! O, these naughty times
 Put bars between the owners and their rights !
 And so, though yours, not yours. — Prove it so, 20
 Let fortune go to hell for it, not I.
 I speak too long ; but 'tis to peize the time,
 To eke it and to draw it out in length,
 To stay you from election.

Bassanio. Let me choose ;
 For as I am, I live upon the rack. 25

Por. Upon the rack, Bassanio ! then confess
 What treason there is mingled with your love.

Bass. None but that ugly treason of mistrust,
 Which makes me fear the enjoying of my love.
 There may as well be amity and life 30
 'Tween snow and fire, as treason and my love.

Por. Ay, but I fear you speak upon the rack,
 Where men enforcèd do speak any thing.

Bass. Promise me life, and I'll confess the truth.

Por. Well then, confess and live.

Bass. Confess and love, 35
 Had been the very sum of my confession. —
 O happy torment, when my torturer
 Doth teach me answers for deliverance !
 But let me to my fortune and the caskets.

Por. Away, then ! I am locked in one of them ; 40
 If you do love me, you will find me out.
 Nerissa and the rest, stand all aloof.
 Let music sound while he doth make his choice ;

Then, if he lose, he makes a swan-like end,
Fading in music. That the comparison 45
May stand more proper, my eye shall be the stream
And watery death-bed for him. He may win ;
And what is music then ? Then music is
Even as the flourish when true subjects bow
To a new-crownèd monarch ; such it is 50
As are those dulcet sounds in break of day
That creep into the dreaming bridegroom's ear,
And summon him to marriage. Now he goes,
With no less presence, but with much more love,
Than young Alcides, when he did redeem 55
The virgin tribute paid by howling Troy
To the sea-monster. I stand for sacrifice ;
The rest aloof are the Dardanian wives,
With blearèd visages, come forth to view
The issue of the exploit. Go, Hercules ! 60
Live thou, I live. With much much more dismay
I view the fight than thou that makest the fray.

Music.

A song the whilst BASSANIO comments on the caskets to himself.

SONG.

*Tell me where is fancy bred,
Or in the heart or in the head ;
How begot, how nourishèd ;* 65

Reply, reply.

*It is engendered in the eyes,
With gazing fed ; and fancy dies
In the cradle where it lies.
Let us all ring fancy's knell : 70
I'll begin it, — Ding, dong, bell.
All. Ding, dong, bell.*

Bass. So may the outward shows be least themselves.

The world is still deceived with ornament.

In law, what plea so tainted and corrupt, 75

But, being seasoned with a gracious voice,

Obscures the show of evil? In religion,

What damnèd error, but some sober brow

Will bless it, and approve it with a text,

Hiding the grossness with fair ornament? 80

There is no vice so simple, but assumes

Some mark of virtue on his outward parts.

How many cowards, whose hearts are all as false

As stairs of sand, wear yet upon their chins

The beards of Hercules and frowning Mars, 85

Who, inward searched, have livers white as milk ;

And these assume but valor's excrement

To render them redoubted. Look on beauty,

And you shall see 'tis purchased by the weight,

Which therein works a miracle in nature, 90

Making them lightest that wear most of it ;

So are those crispèd snaky golden locks

Which make such wanton gambols with the wind,

Upon supposèd fairness, often known

To be the dowry of a second head, 95

The skull that bred them, in the sepulchre.

Thus ornament is but the guilèd shore

To a most dangerous sea, — the beauteous scarf

Veiling an Indian ; beauty, in a word,

The seeming truth which cunning times put on 100

To entrap the wisest. Therefore, thou gaudy gold,

Hard food for Midas, I will none of thee ;

Nor none of thee, thou pale and common drudge

'Tween man and man ; but thou, thou meager lead,

Which rather threatenest than dost promise aught, 105

Thy paleness moves me more than eloquence ;

And here choose I. — Joy be the consequence !

Por. [*Aside*] How all the other passions fleet to air,
As doubtful thoughts, and rash-embraced despair,

And shuddering fear, and green-eyed jealousy ! 110

O love, be moderate, allay thy ecstasy,

In measure rain thy joy, scant this excess !

I feel too much thy blessing ; make it less,

For fear I surfeit !

Bass. What find I here ?

[*Opening the leaden casket.*]

Fair Portia's counterfeit ! What demi-god 115

Hath come so near creation ? Move these eyes ?

Or whether, riding on the balls of mine,

Seem they in motion ? Here are severed lips,

Parted with sugar breath, — so sweet a bar

Should sunder such sweet friends. Here in her hairs 120

The painter plays the spider, and hath woven

A golden mesh to entrap the hearts of men

Faster than gnats in cobwebs ; but her eyes, —

How could he see to do them ? having made one,

Methinks it should have power to steal both his 125

And leave itself unfurnished. Yet look, how far

The substance of my praise doth wrong this shadow

In underprizing it, so far this shadow

Doth limp behind the substance. Here's the scroll,

The continent and summary of my fortune. 130

[*Reads*] *You that choose not by the view,
Chance as fair, and choose as true,
Since this fortune falls to you,
Be content and seek no new.*

If you be well pleased with this, 135
And hold your fortune for your bliss,
Turn you where your lady is,
And claim her with a loving kiss.

A gentle scroll. Fair lady, by your leave ;
 I come by note, to give and to receive. 140
 Like one of two contending in a prize,
 That thinks he hath done well in people's eyes,
 Hearing applause and universal shout,
 Giddy in spirit, still gazing in a doubt
 Whether those peals of praise be his or no, 145
 So, thrice-fair lady, stand I, even so ;
 As doubtful whether what I see be true,
 Until confirmed, signed, ratified by you.

Por. You see me, Lord Bassanio, where I stand,
 Such as I am. Though for myself alone 150
 I would not be ambitious in my wish
 To wish myself much better ; yet, for you,
 I would be trebled twenty times myself ;
 A thousand times more fair, ten thousand times
 More rich, that only to stand high in your account, 155
 I might in virtues, beauties, livings, friends,
 Exceed account. But the full sum of me
 Is sum of nothing, which, to term in gross,
 Is an unlessoned girl, unschooled, unpractised ;
 Happy in this, she is not yet so old 160
 But she may learn ; happier than this,
 She is not bred so dull but she can learn ;
 Happiest of all is that her gentle spirit
 Commits itself to yours to be directed,
 As from her lord, her governor, her king. 165
 Myself, and what is mine, to you and yours

Is now converted. But now I was the lord
Of this fair mansion, master of my servants,
Queen o'er myself; and even now, but now,
This house, these servants, and this same myself, 170
Are yours, my lord; I give them with this ring;
Which when you part from, lose, or give away,
Let it presage the ruin of your love,
And be my vantage to exclaim on you.

Bass. Madam, you have bereft me of all words, 175
Only my blood speaks to you in my veins;
And there is such confusion in my powers,
As, after some oration fairly spoke
By a beloved Prince, there doth appear
Among the buzzing, pleasèd multitude; 180
Where every something, being blent together,
Turns to a wild of nothing, save of joy,
Expressed and not expressed. But when this ring
Parts from this finger, then parts life from hence;
O, then be bold to say Bassanio's dead. 185

Nerissa. My lord and lady, it is now our time,
That have stood by and seen our wishes prosper,
To cry, good joy. Good joy, my lord and lady!

Gratiano. My lord Bassanio and my gentle lady,
I wish you all the joy that you can wish; 190
For I am sure you can wish none from me;
And when your honors mean to solemnise
The bargain of your faith, I do beseech you,
Even at that time I may be married too.

Bass. With all my heart, so thou canst get a wife. 195

Gra. I thank your lordship, you have got me one.
My eyes, my lord, can look as swift as yours.
You saw the mistress, I beheld the maid;

You loved, I loved, for intermission
No more pertains to me, my lord, than you. 200
Your fortune stood upon the casket there,
And so did mine too, as the matter falls ;
For wooing here until I sweat again,
And swearing till my very roof was dry
With oaths of love, at last, if promise last, 205
I got a promise of this fair one here
To have her love, provided that your fortune
Achieved her mistress.

Por. Is this true, Nerissa?

Ner. Madam, it is, so you stand pleased withal.

Bass. And do you, Gratiano, mean good faith? 210

Gra. Yes, faith, my lord.

Bass. Our feast shall be much honored in your
marriage.

Gra. But who comes here? Lorenzo and his infidel?
What, and my old Venetian friend Salerio?

Enter LORENZO, JESSICA, and SALERIO.

Bass. Lorenzo and Salerio, welcome hither, 215
If that the youth of my new interest here
Have power to bid you welcome. By your leave,
I bid my very friends and countrymen,
Sweet Portia, welcome.

Por. So do I, my lord ;
They are entirely welcome. 220

Lorenzo. I thank your honor. For my part, my lord,
My purpose was not to have seen you here ;
But meeting with Salerio by the way,
He did entreat me, past all saying nay,
To come with him along.

My state was nothing, I should then have told
you

That I was worse than nothing ; for, indeed, 255

I have engaged myself to a dear friend,

Engaged my friend to his mere enemy,

To feed my means. Here is a letter, lady, —

The paper as the body of my friend,

And every word in it a gaping wound 260

Issuing life-blood. But is it true, Salerio?

Have all his ventures failed? What, not one hit?

From Tripolis, from Mexico, and England,

From Lisbon, Barbary, and India?

And not one vessel 'scape the dreadful touch 265

Of merchant-marring rocks?

Sal.

Not one, my lord.

Besides, it should appear, that if he had

The present money to discharge the Jew,

He would not take it. Never did I know

A creature that did bear the shape of man 270

So keen and greedy to confound a man.

He plies the Duke at morning and at night,

And doth impeach the freedom of the state,

If they deny him justice. Twenty merchants,

The Duke himself, and the magnificoes 275

Of greatest port, have all persuaded with him ;

But none can drive him from the envious plea

Of forfeiture, of justice, and his bond.

Jessica. When I was with him I have heard him swear

To Tubal and to Chus, his countrymen, 280

That he would rather have Antonio's flesh

Than twenty times the value of the sum

That he did owe him ; and I know, my lord,

If law, authority, and power deny not,
It will go hard with poor Antonio. 285

Por. Is it your dear friend that is thus in trouble?

Bass. The dearest friend to me, the kindest man,
The best-conditioned and unwearied spirit
In doing courtesies; and one in whom
The ancient Roman honor more appears 290
Than any that draws breath in Italy.

Por. What sum owes he the Jew?

Bass. For me three thousand ducats.

Por. What, no more?

Pay him six thousand, and deface the bond;
Double six thousand and then treble that, 295
Before a friend of this description
Shall lose a hair through Bassanio's fault.
First go with me to church, and call me wife,
And then away to Venice to your friend;
For never shall you lie by Portia's side 300
With an unquiet soul. You shall have gold
To pay the petty debt twenty times over;
When it is paid, bring your true friend along.
My maid Nerissa and myself meantime
Will live as maids and widows. Come, away! 305
For you shall hence upon your wedding-day.
Bid your friends welcome, show a merry cheer;
Since you are dear bought, I will love you dear.
But let me hear the letter of your friend.

Bass. [*Reads*]

Sweet Bassanio, my ships have all miscarried, my 310
creditors grow cruel, my estate is very low, my bond to
the Jew is forfeit; and since in paying it, it is im-

possible I should live, all debts are cleared between you and I, if I might but see you at my death. Notwithstanding, use your pleasure; if your love do not per- 315
suade you to come, let not my letter.

Por. O love, dispatch all business and be gone!

Bass. Since I have your good leave to go away,
 I will make haste; but, till I come again,
 No bed shall e'er be guilty of my stay, 320
 No rest be interposer 'twixt us twain. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III

Venice. A Street.

Enter SHYLOCK and SALARINO, ANTONIO, and the Gaoler.

Shylock. Gaoler, look to him. Tell not me of mercy;
 This is the fool that lent out money gratis.
 Gaoler, look to him.

Antonio. Hear me yet, good Shylock.

Shy. I'll have my bond; speak not against my bond.
 I have sworn an oath that I will have my bond. 5
 Thou call'dst me dog before thou hadst a cause;
 But, since I am a dog, beware my fangs.
 The Duke shall grant me justice. I do wonder,
 Thou naughty gaoler, that thou art so fond
 To come abroad with him at his request. 10

Ant. I pray thee, hear me speak.

Shy. I'll have my bond; I will not hear thee speak.
 I'll have my bond; and therefore speak no more
 I'll not be made a soft and dull-eyed fool,
 To shake the head, relent, and sigh, and yield 15
 To Christian intercessors. Follow not;
 I'll have no speaking; I will have my bond. [*Exit.*

Salarino. It is the most impenetrable cur
That ever kept with men.

Ant. Let him alone ;
I'll follow him no more with bootless prayers 20
He seeks my life ; his reason well I know :
I oft delivered from his forfeitures
Many that have at times made moan to me ;
Therefore he hates me.

Salar. I am sure the Duke
Will never grant this forfeiture to hold. 25

Ant. The Duke cannot deny the course of law ;
For the commodity that strangers have
With us in Venice, if it be denied,
Will much impeach the justice of his state,
Since that the trade and profit of the city 30
Consisteth of all nations. Therefore, go.
These griefs and losses have so 'bated me,
That I shall hardly spare a pound of flesh
To-morrow to my bloody creditor.
Well, gaoler, on. Pray God, Bassanio come 35
To see me pay his debt, and then I care not !

[*Exeunt.*]

Scene IV

Belmont. A Room in Portia's House.

Enter PORTIA, NERISSA, LORENZO, JESSICA, and BALTHASAR.

Lorenzo. Madam, although I speak it in your presence,
You have a noble and a true conceit
Of god-like amity ; which appears most strongly
In bearing thus the absence of your lord.
But if you knew to whom you show this honor, 5

How true a gentleman you send relief,
How dear a lover of my lord your husband,
I know you would be prouder of the work
Than customary bounty can enforce you.

Por. I never did repent for doing good, 10
Nor shall not now; for in companions
That do converse and waste the time together,
Whose souls do bear an equal yoke of love,
There must needs be a like proportion
Of lineaments, of manners and of spirit; 15
Which makes me think that this Antonio,
Being the bosom lover of my lord,
Must needs be like my lord. If it be so,
How little is the cost I have bestowed
In purchasing the semblance of my soul 20
From out the state of hellish cruelty!
This comes too near the praising of myself;
Therefore no more of it. Hear other things:
Lorenzo, I commit into your hands
The husbandry and manage of my house 25
Until my lord's return; for mine own part,
I have toward heaven breathed a secret vow
To live in prayer and contemplation,
Only attended by Nerissa here,
Until her husband and my lord's return. 30
There is a monastery two miles off;
And there will we abide. I do desire you
Not to deny this imposition,
The which my love and some necessity
Now lays upon you.

Lor. Madam, with all my heart 35
I shall obey you in all fair commands.

Por. My people do already know my mind,
And will acknowledge you and Jessica
In place of Lord Bassanio and myself.
So fare you well, till we shall meet again. 40

Lor. Fair thoughts and happy hours attend on you !

Jes. I wish your ladyship all heart's content.

Por. I thank you for your wish, and am well pleased
To wish it back on you. Fare you well, Jessica.

[*Exeunt JESSICA and LORENZO.*]

Now, Balthasar, as I have ever found thee honest
true, 45

So let me find thee still. Take this same letter,
And use thou all the endeavor of a man
In speed to Padua ; see thou render this
Into my cousin's hand, Doctor Bellario ;
And look what notes and garments he doth give thee, 50
Bring them, I pray thee, with imagined speed
Unto the traject, to the common ferry
Which trades to Venice. Waste no time in words,
But get thee gone ; I shall be there before thee.

Balth. Madam, I go with all convenient speed. [*Exit.* 55

Por. Come on, Nerissa ; I have work in hand
That you yet know not of. We'll see our husbands
Before they think of us.

Ner. Shall they see us ?

Por. They shall, Nerissa ; but in such a habit,
That they shall think we are accomplished 60
With that we lack. I'll hold thee any wager,
When we are both accoutred like young men,
I'll prove the prettier fellow of the two,
And wear my dagger with a braver grace ;
And speak between the change of man and boy 65

With a reed voice, and turn two mincing steps
 Into a manly stride; and speak of frays
 Like a fine bragging youth; and tell quaint lies,
 How honorable ladies sought my love,
 Which I denying, they fell sick and died, — 70
 I could not do withal; then I'll repent,
 And wish, for all that, that I had not killed them;
 And twenty of these puny lies I'll tell,
 That men shall swear I have discontinued school
 Above a twelvemonth. I have within my mind 75
 A thousand raw tricks of these bragging Jacks,
 Which I will practice.

Ner. Why, shall we turn to men?

Por. Fie, what a question's that! . . .

But come, I'll tell thee all my whole device
 When I am in my coach, which stays for us 80
 At the park gate; and therefore haste away,
 For we must measure twenty miles to-day.

[*Exeunt.*]

Scene V

The Same. A Garden.

Enter LAUNCELOT and JESSICA.

Launcelot. Yes, truly; for, look you, the sins of the
 father are to be laid upon the children; therefore, I
 promise ye, I fear you. I was always plain with you,
 and so now I speak my agitation of the matter.
 Therefore be of good cheer; for, truly, I think you 5
 are damned. There is but one hope in it that can do
 you any good; and that is but a kind of bastard hope
 neither.

Jessica. And what hope is that, I pray thee?

Laun. Marry, you may partly hope that your father
got you not, that you are not the Jew's daughter. 10

Jes. That were a kind of bastard hope, indeed, so the
sins of my mother should be visited upon me.

Laun. Truly then I fear you are damned both by father
and mother. Thus when I shun Scylla, your 15
father, I fall into Charybdis, your mother. Well,
you are gone both ways.

Jes. I shall be saved by my husband ; he hath made me
a Christian.

Laun. Truly, the more to blame he. We were Chris- 20
tians enow before ; e'en as many as could well live,
one by another. This making of Christians will
raise the price of hogs. If we grow all to be pork-
eaters, we shall not shortly have a rasher on the coals
for money. 25

Enter LORENZO.

Jes. I'll tell my husband, Launcelot, what you say.
Here he comes.

Lorenzo. I shall grow jealous of you shortly, Launcelot,
if you thus get my wife into corners.

Jes. Nay, you need not fear us, Lorenzo ; Launcelot and 30
I are out. He tells me flatly, there is no mercy for
me in heaven, because I am a Jew's daughter ; and
he says you are no good member of the common-
wealth, for, in converting Jews to Christians, you
raise the price of pork. . . . 35

Lor. I think the best grace of wit will shortly turn into
silence, and discourse grow commendable in none
only but parrots. Go in, sirrah ; bid them prepare
for dinner.

- Laun.* That is done, sir; they have all stomachs. 40
- Lor.* Goodly Lord, what a wit-snapper are you! Then
bid them prepare dinner.
- Laun.* That is done too, sir; only *cover* is the word.
- Lor.* Will you cover, then, sir?
- Laun.* Not so, sir, neither; I know my duty. 45
- Lor.* Yet more quarrelling with occasion! Wilt thou
show the whole wealth of thy wit in an instant? I
pray thee, understand a plain man in his plain
meaning. Go to thy fellows; bid them cover the
table, serve in the meat, and we will come in to 50
dinner.
- Laun.* For the table, sir, it shall be served in; for the
meat, sir, it shall be covered; for your coming in to
dinner, sir, why, let it be as humors and conceits shall
govern. [Exit. 55
- Lor.* O dear discretion, how his words are suited!
The fool hath planted in his memory
An army of good words; and I do know
A many fools, that stand in better place,
Garnished like him, that for a tricky word 60
Defy the matter. How cheer'st thou, Jessica?
And now, good sweet, say thy opinion,
How dost thou like the Lord Bassanio's wife?
- Jes.* Past all expressing. It is very meet
The Lord Bassanio live an upright life; 65
For, having such a blessing in his lady,
He finds the joys of heaven here on earth;
And if on earth he do not mean it, then
In reason he should never come to heaven.
Why, if two gods should play some heavenly match 70
And on the wager lay two earthly women,

And Portia one, there must be something else
Pawned with the other, for the poor rude world
Hath not her fellow.

Lor. Even such a husband

Hast thou of me as she is for a wife.

75

Jes. Nay, but ask my opinion, too, of that.

Lor. I will anon; first, let us go to dinner.

Jes. Nay, let me praise you while I have a stomach.

Lor. No, pray thee, let it serve for table-talk;

Then, howsome'er thou speak'st, 'mong other things 80

I shall digest it.

Jes. Well, I'll set you forth. [*Exeunt.*]

Act Fourth

Scene I

Venice. The Court of Justice.

*Enter the DUKE, the Magnificoes, ANTONIO, BASSANIO,
GRATIANO, SALERIO, and others.*

Duke. What, is Antonio here?

Antonio. Ready, so please your Grace.

Duke. I am sorry for thee; thou art come to answer
A stony adversary, an inhuman wretch
Uncapable of pity, void and empty,
From any dram of mercy.

5

Ant. I have heard
Your Grace hath ta'en great pains to qualify
His rigorous course; but since he stands obdúrate,
And that no lawful means can carry me
Out of his envy's reach, I do oppose
My patience to his fury, and am armed
To suffer with a quietness of spirit
The very tyranny and rage of his.

10

Duke. Go one, and call the Jew into the court.

Salerio. He is ready at the door; he comes, my lord.

15

Enter SHYLOCK.

Duke. Make room, and let him stand before our face.
Shylock, the world thinks, and I think so too,
That thou but lead'st this fashion of thy malice

To the last hour of act ; and then 'tis thought
Thou'lt show thy mercy and remorse more strange 20
Than is thy strange apparent cruelty ;
And where thou now exact'st the penalty,
Which is a pound of this poor merchant's flesh,
Thou wilt not only loose the forfeiture,
But touched with human gentleness and love, 25
Forgive a moiety of the principal ;
Glancing an eye of pity on his losses
That have of late so huddled on his back,
Enow to press a royal merchant down,
And pluck commiseration of his state 30
From brassy bosoms and rough hearts of flint,
From stubborn Turks and Tartars, never trained
To offices of tender courtesy.
We all expect a gentle answer, Jew.

Shylock. I have possessed your Grace of what I purpose ; 35
And by our holy Sabbath have I sworn
To have the due and forfeit of my bond.
If you deny it, let the danger light
Upon your charter and your city's freedom.
You'll ask me why I rather choose to have 40
A weight of carrion-flesh than to receive
Three thousand ducats ; I'll not answer that,
But, say, it is my humor. Is it answered ?
What if my house be troubled with a rat,
And I be pleased to give ten thousand ducats 45
To have it baned ? What, are you answered yet ?
Some men there are love not a gaping pig ;
Some, that are mad if they behold a cat. . . .

For affection,
Master of passion, sways it to the mood 50

Of what it likes or loathes.

Now, for your answer,

As there is no firm reason to be rendered,

Why he cannot abide a gaping pig,

Why he, a harmless necessary cat ; 55

So can I give no reason; nor I will not,

More than a lodged hate and a certain loathing

I bear Antonio, that I follow thus

A losing suit against him. Are you answered ?

Bassanio. This is no answer, thou unfeeling man, 60

To excuse the current of thy cruelty.

Shy. I am not bound to please thee with my answer.

Bass. Do all men kill the things they do not love ?

Shy. Hates any man the thing he would not kill ?

Bass. Every offence is not a hate at first. 65

Shy. What, wouldst thou have a serpent sting thee
twice ?

Ant. I pray you, think you question with the Jew.

You may as well go stand upon the beach,

And bid the main flood 'bate his usual height ;

You may as well use question with the wolf, 70

Why he hath made the ewe bleat for the lamb ;

You may as well forbid the mountain pines

To wag their high tops and to make no noise,

When they are fretten with the gusts of heaven ;

You may as well do any thing most hard, 75

As seek to soften that — than which what's
harder ? —

His Jewish heart. Therefore, I do beseech you,

Make no more offers, use no farther means,

But with all brief and plain conveniency

Let me have judgment and the Jew his will. 80

Bass. For thy three thousand ducats here is six.

Shy. If every ducat in six thousand ducats

Were in six parts, and every part a ducat,

I would not draw them ; I would have my bond.

Duke. How shalt thou hope for mercy, rendering none? 85

Shy. What judgment shall I dread, doing no wrong?

You have among you many a purchased slave,

Which, like your asses and your dogs and mules,

You use in abject and in slavish parts,

Because you bought them. Shall I say to you, 90

Let them be free, marry them to your heirs?

Why sweat they under burthens? let their beds

Be made as soft as yours, and let their palates

Be seasoned with such viands? You will answer

The slaves are ours. So do I answer you. 95

The pound of flesh, which I demand of him,

Is dearly bought ; 'tis mine, and I will have it.

If you deny me, fie upon your law !

There is no force in the decrees of Venice.

I stand for judgment ; answer, shall I have it? 100

Duke. Upon my power I may dismiss this court,

Unless Bellario, a learned Doctor,

Whom I have sent for to determine this,

Come here to-day.

Saler. My lord, here stays without

A messenger with letters from the Doctor, 105

New come from Padua.

Duke. Bring us the letters ; call the messenger.

Bass. Good cheer, Antonio ! What, man, courage yet !

The Jew shall have my flesh, blood, bones, and all,

Ere thou shalt lose for me one drop of blood. 110

Ant. I am a tainted wether of the flock,

Meetest for death. The weakest kind of fruit
Drops earliest to the ground, and so let me.
You cannot better be employed, Bassanio,
Than to live still, and write mine epitaph. 115

Enter NERISSA, dressed like a lawyer's clerk.

Duke. Came you from Padua, from Bellario?

Nerissa. From both, my lord. Bellario greets your
Grace. [*Presenting a letter.*

Bass. Why dost thou whet thy knife so earnestly?

Shy. To cut the forfeiture from that bankrupt there.

Gratiano. Not on thy sole, but on thy soul, harsh Jew, 120
Thou makest thy knife keen; but no metal can,
No, not the hangman's axe, bear half the keenness
Of thy sharp envy. Can no prayers pierce thee?

Shy. No, none that thou hast wit enough to make.

Gra. O, be thou damned, execrable dog! 125
And for thy life let justice be accused.

Thou almost makest me waver in my faith,
To hold opinion with Pythagoras,
That souls of animals infuse themselves
Into the trunks of men. Thy currish spirit 130
Governed a wolf, who hanged for human slaughter,
Even from the gallows did his fell soul fleet,
And, whilst thou lay'st in thy unhallowed dam,
Infused itself in thee; for thy desires
Are wolfish, bloody, starved, and ravenous. 135

Shy. Till thou canst rail the seal from off my bond,
Thou but offend'st thy lungs to speak so loud.
Repair thy wit, good youth, or it will fall
To cureless ruin. I stand here for law.

Duke. This letter from Bellario doth commend 140

A young and learned Doctor to our Court.
Where is he ?

Ner. He attendeth here hard by
To know your answer, whether you'll admit him.

Duke. With all my heart. Some three or four of you
Go give him courteous conduct to this place. 145
Meantime the Court shall hear Bellario's letter.

Clerk. [*Reads*]
*Your Grace shall understand that at the receipt of your
letter I am very sick ; but in the instant that your mes-
senger came, in loving visitation was with me a young
Doctor of Rome , his name is Balthasar. I acquainted 150
him with the cause in controversy between the Jew and
Antonio the merchant. We turned o'er many books
together ; he is furnished with my opinion, which,
bettered with his own learning, — the greatness
whereof I cannot enough commend, — comes with him, 155
at my importunity, to fill up your Grace's request in
my stead. I beseech you, let his lack of years be no
impediment to let him lack a reverend estimation ; for I
never knew so young a body with so old a head. I
leave him to your gracious acceptance, whose trial shall 160
better publish his commendation.*

Duke. You hear the learned Bellario, what he writes :
And here, I take it, is the Doctor come.

Enter PORTIA, for Balthasar.

Give me your hand. Came you from old Bellario ?

Portia. I did, my lord.

Duke. You are welcome ; take your place. 165
Are you acquainted with the difference
That holds this present question in the court ?

Por. I am informèd throughly of the cause.

Which is the merchant here? and which the Jew?

Duke. Antonio and old Shylock, both stand forth. 170

Por. Is your name Shylock?

Shy. Shylock is my name.

Por. Of a strange nature is the suit you follow,

Yet in such rule that the Venetian law

Cannot impugn you as you do proceed.

You stand within his danger, do you not? 175

Ant. Ay, so he says.

Por. Do you confess the bond?

Ant. I do.

Por. Then must the Jew be merciful.

Shy. On what compulsion must I? tell me that.

Por. The quality of mercy is not strained;
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven 180
Upon the place beneath. It is twice blest:

It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes.

'Tis mightiest in the mightiest; it becomes

The thronèd monarch better than his crown.

His sceptre shows the force of temporal power, 185

The attribute to awe and majesty,

Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;

But mercy is above this sceptred sway;

It is enthronèd in the hearts of kings; 190

It is an attribute to God himself;

And earthly power doth then show likest God's

When mercy seasons justice. Therefore, Jew,

Though justice be thy plea, consider this,

That, in the course of justice, none of us

Should see salvation; we do pray for mercy; 195

And that same prayer doth teach us all to render

The deeds of mercy. I have spoke thus much
To mitigate the justice of thy plea,
Which if thou follow, this strict Court of Venice
Must needs give sentence 'gainst the merchant there. 200

Shy. My deeds upon my head! I crave the law,
The penalty and forfeit of my bond.

Por. Is he not able to discharge the money?

Bass. Yes, here I tender it for him in the court;
Yea, twice the sum. If that will not suffice, 205
I will be bound to pay it ten times o'er,
On forfeit of my hands, my head, my heart.
If this will not suffice, it must appear
That malice bears down truth. And I beseech you,
Wrest once the law to your authority; 210
To do a great right, do a little wrong,
And curb this cruel devil of his will.

Por. It must not be; there is no power in Venice
Can alter a decree establishèd.
'Twill be recorded for a precedent, 215
And many an error, by the same example,
Will rush into the state; it cannot be.

Shy. A Daniel come to judgment! yea, a Daniel!
O wise young judge, how I do honor thee!

Por. I pray you, let me look upon the bond. 220

Shy. Here 'tis, most reverend Doctor, here it is.

Por. Shylock, there's thrice thy money offered thee.

Shy. An oath, an oath, I have an oath in heaven!
Shall I lay perjury upon my soul?
No, not for Venice.

Por. Why, this bond is forfeit; 225
And lawfully by this the Jew may claim
A pound of flesh, to be by him cut off

Nearest the merchant's heart. Be merciful;
Take thrice thy money; bid me tear the bond.

Shy. When it is paid according to the tenor. 230

It doth appear you are a worthy judge;
You know the law, your exposition
Hath been most sound. I charge you by the law,
Whereof you are a well-deserving pillar,
Proceed to judgment. By my soul I swear 235
There is no power in the tongue of man
To alter me; I stay here on my bond.

Ant. Most heartily I do beseech the court
To give the judgment.

Por. Why then, thus it is:
You must prepare your bosom for his knife. — 240

Shy. O noble judge! O excellent young man!

Por. For the intent and purpose of the law
Hath full relation to the penalty,
Which here appeareth due upon the bond. —

Shy. 'Tis very true. O wise and upright judge! 245
How much more elder art thou than thy looks!

Por. Therefore lay bare your bosom.

Shy. Ay, his breast:
So says the bond, — doth it not, noble judge? —
"Nearest his heart"; — those are the very words.

Por. It is so. Are there balance here to weigh 250
The flesh?

Shy. I have them ready.

Por. Have by some surgeon, Shylock, on your charge,
To stop his wounds, lest he do bleed to death.

Shy. Is it so nominated in the bond?

Por. It is not so expressed; but what of that? 255
'Twere good you do so much for charity.

Shy. I cannot find it; 'tis not in the bond.

Por. You, merchant, have you anything to say?

Ant. But little: I am armed and well prepared.

Give me your hand, Bassanio; fare you well! 260

Grieve not that I am fallen to this for you;

For herein Fortune shows herself more kind

Than is her custom. It is still her use

To let the wretched man outlive his wealth,

To view with hollow eye and wrinkled brow 265

An age of poverty; from which lingering penance

Of such misery doth she cut me off.

Commend me to your honorable wife.

Tell her the process of Antonio's end;

Say how I loved you, speak me fair in death; 270

And, when the tale is told, bid her be judge

Whether Bassanio had not once a love.

Repent but you that you shall lose your friend,

And he repents not that he pays your debt;

For if the Jew do cut but deep enough, 275

I'll pay it instantly with all my heart.

Bass. Antonio, I am married to a wife

Which is as dear to me as life itself;

But life itself, my wife, and all the world,

Are not with me esteemed above thy life. 280

I would lose all, ay, sacrifice them all

Here to this devil, to deliver you.

Por. Your wife would give you little thanks for that,

If she were by, to hear you make the offer.

Gra. I have a wife, whom, I protest, I love; 285

I would she were in heaven, so she could

Entreat some power to change this currish Jew.

Ner. 'Tis well you offer it behind her back;

The wish would make else an unquiet house.

Shy. [*Aside*] These be the Christian husbands. I have
a daughter ; 290

Would any of the stock of Barrabas
Had been her husband rather than a Christian !
We trifle time ; I pray thee pursue sentence.

Por. A pound of that same merchant's flesh is thine ;
The Court awards it, and the law doth give it. — 295

Shy. Most rightful judge !

Por. And you must cut this flesh from off his breast ;
The law allows it, and the Court awards it.

Shy. Most learned judge ! A sentence ! Come, prepare !

Por. Tarry a little ; there is something else. 300

This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood ;
The words expressly are "*a pound of flesh.*"
Take then thy bond, take thou thy pound of flesh ;
But, in the cutting it, if thou dost shed
One drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods 305
Are by the laws of Venice confiscate
Unto the state of Venice.

Gra. O upright judge ! Mark, Jew ; O learned judge !

Shy. Is that the law ?

Por. Thyself shall see the act ;
For, as thou urgest justice, be assured 310
Thou shalt have justice, more than thou desirest.

Gra. O learned judge ! Mark, Jew ; a learned judge !

Shy. I take this offer, then ; pay the bond thrice,
And let the Christian go.

Bass. Here is the money.

Por. Soft ! The Jew shall have all justice ; soft ! no
haste ! 315

He shall have nothing but the penalty.

Gra. O Jew, an upright judge ! a learned judge !

- Por.* Therefore prepare thee to cut off the flesh.
Shed thou no blood ; nor cut thou less nor more
But just a pound of flesh. If thou cut'st more 320
Or less than a just pound, be it but so much
As makes it light or heavy in the substance,
Or the division, of the twentieth part
Of one poor scruple ; nay, if the scale do turn
But in the estimation of a hair, 325
Thou diest and all thy goods are confiscate.
- Gra.* A second Daniel, a Daniel, Jew !
Now, infidel, I have you on the hip.
- Por.* Why doth the Jew pause ? Take thy forfeiture.
- Shy.* Give me my principal, and let me go. 330
- Bass.* I have it ready for thee ; here it is.
- Por.* He hath refused it in the open Court ;
He shall have merely justice and his bond.
- Gra.* A Daniel, still say I, a second Daniel !
I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word. 335
- Shy.* Shall I not have barely my principal ?
- Por.* Thou shalt have nothing but the forfeiture,
To be so taken at thy peril, Jew.
- Shy.* Why, then the devil give him good of it !
I'll stay no longer question.
- Por.* Tarry, Jew. 340
The law hath yet another hold on you.
It is enacted in the laws of Venice,
If it be proved against an alien
That by direct or indirect attempts
He seek the life of any citizen, 345
The party 'gainst the which he doth contrive
Shall seize one half his goods, the other half
Comes to the privy coffer of the state,

And the offender's life lies in the mercy
Of the Duke only, 'gainst all other voice; 350
In which predicament, I say, thou stand'st.
For it appears by manifest proceeding
That indirectly, and directly too,
Thou hast contrived against the very life
Of the defendant; and thou hast incurred 355
The danger formerly by me rehearsed.
Down, therefore, and beg mercy of the Duke.

Gra. Beg that thou mayst have leave to hang thyself;
And yet, thy wealth being forfeit to the state,
Thou hast not left the value of a cord; 360
Therefore thou must be hanged at the state's charge.

Duke. That thou shalt see the difference of our spirit,
I pardon thee thy life before thou ask it.
For half thy wealth, it is Antonio's;
The other half comes to the general state, 365
Which humbleness may drive unto a fine.

Por. Ay, for the state, not for Antonio.

Shy. Nay, take my life and all; pardon not that.
You take my house, when you do take the prop
That doth sustain my house; you take my life, 370
When you do take the means whereby I live.

Por. What mercy can you render him, Antonio?

Gra. A halter gratis; nothing else, for God's sake.

Ant. So please my lord the Duke and all the court
To quit the fine for one half of his goods, 375
I am content; so he will let me have
The other half in use, to render it,
Upon his death, unto the gentleman
That lately stole his daughter.
Two things provided more: that, for this favor, 380

He presently become a Christian ;
The other, that he do record a gift
Here in the Court, of all he dies possessed,
Unto his son Lorenzo and his daughter.

Duke. He shall do this, or else I do recant 385
The pardon that I late pronouncèd here.

Por. Art thou contented, Jew? What dost thou say?

Shy. I am content.

Por. Clerk, draw a deed of gift.

Shy. I pray you, give me leave to go from hence ;
I am not well. Send the deed after me, 390
And I will sign it.

Duke. Get thee gone, but do it.

Gra. In christening shalt thou have two godfathers.
Had I been judge, thou shouldst have had ten more,
To bring thee to the gallows, not the font.

[*Exit SHYLOCK.*

Duke. Sir, I entreat you home with me to dinner. 395

Por. I humbly do desire your Grace of pardon ;
I must away this night toward Padua,
And it is meet I presently set forth.

Duke. I am sorry that your leisure serves you not.
Antonio, gratify this gentleman, 400
For, in my mind, you are much bound to him.

[*Exeunt DUKE and his train.*

Bass. Most worthy gentleman, I and my friend
Have by your wisdom been this day acquitted
Of grievous penalties ; in lieu whereof,
Three thousand ducats, due unto the Jew, 405
We freely cope your courteous pains withal.

Ant. And stand indebted, over and above,
In love and service to you evermore.

Por. He is well paid that is well satisfied ;
And I, delivering you, am satisfied, 410
And therein do account myself well paid ;
My mind was never yet more mercenary.
I pray you, know me when we meet again ;
I wish you well, and so I take my leave.

Bass. Dear sir, of force I must attempt you further. 415
Take some remembrance of us, as a tribute,
Not as a fee ; grant me two things, I pray you,
Not to deny me, and to pardon me.

Por. You press me far, and therefore I will yield.
[*To Antonio*] Give me your gloves, I'll wear them
for your sake ; 420
[*To Bassanio*] And, for your love, I'll take this ring
from you.

Do not draw back your hand ; I'll take no more ;
And you in love shall not deny me this.

Bass. This ring, good sir, alas, it is a trifle !
I will not shame myself to give you this. 425

Por. I will have nothing else but only this ;
And now, methinks, I have a mind to it.

Bass. There's more depends on this than on the value.
The dearest ring in Venice will I give you,
And find it out by proclamation ; 430
Only for this, I pray you, pardon me.

Por. I see, sir, you are liberal in offers.
You taught me first to beg ; and now methinks
You teach me how a beggar should be answered.

Bass. Good sir, this ring was given me by my wife ; 435
And when she put it on, she made me vow
That I should neither sell, nor give, nor lose it.

Por. That 'scuse serves many men to save their gifts.

And if your wife be not a mad woman,
And know how well I have deserved the ring, 440
She would not hold out enemy for ever,
For giving it to me. Well, peace be with you!

[*Exeunt* PORTIA and NERISSA.]

Ant. My Lord Bassanio, let him have the ring: .
Let his deservings and my love withal
Be valued 'gainst your wife's commandment. 445

Bass. Go, Gratiano, run and overtake him;
Give him the ring; and bring him, if thou canst
Unto Antonio's house. Away! make haste.

[*Exit* GRATIANO.]

Come, you and I will thither presently;
And in the morning early will we both 450
Fly toward Belmont. Come, Antonio. [*Exeunt.*]

Scene II

The same. A Street.

Enter PORTIA and NERISSA.

Portia. Inquire the Jew's house out; give him this deed,
And let him sign it. We'll away to-night
And be a day before our husbands home.
This deed will be well welcome to Lorenzo.

Enter GRATIANO.

Gratiano. Fair sir, you are well o'erta'en. 5
My Lord Bassanio upon more advice
Hath sent you here this ring, and doth entreat
Your company at dinner.

Por. That cannot be.
His ring I do accept most thankfully;

And so, I pray you, tell him. Furthermore, 10
I pray you, show my youth old Shylock's house.

Gra. That will I do.

Nerissa. Sir, I would speak with you.

[*Aside to POR.*] I'll see if I can get my husband's
ring,

Which I did make him swear to keep for ever.

Por. [*Aside to NER.*] Thou mayst, I warrant. We
shall have old swearing 15

That they did give the rings away to men;

But we'll outface them, and outswear them too.

[*Aloud*] Away! make haste. Thou know'st where
I will tarry.

Ner. Come, good sir, will you show me to this house?

[*Exeunt.*]

Act Fifth

Scene I

Belmont. Garden before PORTIA'S House.

Enter LORENZO and JESSICA.

Lorenzo. The moon shines bright. In such a night as this,
When the sweet wind did gently kiss the trees
And they did make no noise, in such a night
Troilus, methinks, mounted the Trojan walls,
And sighed his soul toward the Grecian tents, 5
Where Cressid lay that night.

Jessica. In such a night
Did Thisbe fearfully o'ertrip the dew,
And saw the lion's shadow ere himself,
And ran dismayed away.

Lor. In such a night
Stood Dido with a willow in her hand 10
Upon the wild sea banks, and waft her love
To come again to Carthage.

Jes. In such a night
Medea gathered the enchanted herbs
That did renew old Æson.

Lor. In such a night
Did Jessica steal from the wealthy Jew, 15
And with an unthrift love did run from Venice,
As far as Belmont.

Jes. In such a night
Did young Lorenzo swear he loved her well,
Stealing her soul with many vows of faith,
And ne'er a true one.

Lor. In such a night 20
Did pretty Jessica, like a little shrew,
Slander her love, and he forgave it her.

Jes. I would out-night you, did no body come;
But, hark, I hear the footing of a man.

Enter STEPHANO.

Lor. Who comes so fast in silence of the night? 25

Stephano. A friend.

Lor. A friend! what friend? your name, I pray you,
friend?

Steph. Stephano is my name; and I bring word
My mistress will before the break of day
Be here at Belmont. She doth stray about 30
By holy crosses, where she kneels and prays
For happy wedlock hours.

Lor. Who comes with her?

Steph. None but a holy hermit and her maid.

I pray you, is my master yet returned?

Lor. He is not, nor we have not heard from him. 35

But go we in, I pray thee, Jessica,
And ceremoniously let us prepare
Some welcome for the mistress of the house.

Enter LAUNCELOT.

Launcelot. Sola, sola! wo, ha, ho! sola, sola!

Lor. Who calls? 40

Laun. Sola! Did you see Master Lorenzo? Master Lorenzo; sola, sola!

Lor. Leave hollaing, man; here.

Laun. Sola! where? where?

Lor. Here! 45

Laun. Tell him there's a post come from my master, with his horn full of good news; my master will be here ere morning. *[Exit.*

Lor. Sweet soul, let's in, and there expect their coming. And yet no matter; why should we go in? 50
My friend Stephano, signify, I pray you,
Within the house, your mistress is at hand;
And bring your music forth into the air.

[Exit STEPHANO.

How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!
Here will we sit, and let the sounds of music 55
Creep in our ears; soft stillness and the night
Become the touches of sweet harmony.
Sit, Jessica. Look how the floor of heaven
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold.
There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st 60
But in his motion like an angel sings,
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins;
Such harmony is in immortal souls,
But, whilst this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it. 65

Enter MUSICIANS.

Come, ho, and wake Diana with a hymn!
With sweetest touches pierce your mistress' ear,
And draw her home with music. *[Music.*

Jes. I am never merry when I hear sweet music.

Lor. The reason is, your spirits are attentive. 70
For do but note a wild and wanton herd,
Or race of youthful and unhandled colts,
Fetching mad bounds, bellowing and neighing loud,
Which is the hot condition of their blood.
If they but hear perchance a trumpet sound, 75
Or any air of music touch their ears,
You shall perceive them make a mutual stand,
Their savage eyes turned to a modest gaze
By the sweet power of music. Therefore the poet
Did feign that Orpheus drew trees, stones, and
floods ; 80
Since nought so stockish, hard, and full of rage,
But music for the time doth change his nature.
The man that hath no music in himself,
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils ; 85
The motions of his spirit are dull as night,
And his affections dark as Erebus.
Let no such man be trusted. Mark the music.

Enter PORTIA and NERISSA.

Portia. That light you see is burning in my hall.
How far that little candle throws his beams ! 90
So shines a good deed in a naughty world.

Nerissa. When the moon shone, we did not see the
candle.

Por. So doth the greater glory dim the less
A substitute shines brightly as a King,
Until a King be by ; and then his state 95
Empties itself, as doth an inland brook
Into the main of waters. Music ! hark !

Ner. It is your music, madam, of the house.

Por. Nothing is good, I see, without respect ;

Methinks it sounds much sweeter than by day. 100

Ner. Silence bestows that virtue on it, madam.

Por. The crow doth sing as sweetly as the lark,

When neither is attended; and I think

The nightingale, if she should sing by day,

When every goose is cackling, would be thought 105

No better a musician than the wren.

How many things by season seasoned are

To their right praise and true perfection !

Peace, ho! the moon sleeps with Endymion,

And would not be awaked. [*Music ceases.*

Lor. That is the voice, 110

Or I am much deceived, of Portia.

Por. He knows me as the blind man knows the cuckoo,

By the bad voice.

Lor. Dear lady, welcome home.

Por. We have been praying for our husbands' healths,

Which speed, we hope, the better for our words. 115

Are they returned?

Lor. Madam, they are not yet;

But there is come a messenger before,

To signify their coming.

Por. Go in. Nerissa;

Give order to my servants that they take.

No note at all of our being absent hence ; 120

Nor you, Lorenzo ; Jessica, nor you.

[A tucket sounds.]

Lor. Your husband is at hand ; I hear his trumpet :

We are no tell-tales, madam ; fear you not.

Por. This night methinks is but the daylight sick.

It looks a little paler ; 'tis a day, 125
Such as the day is when the sun is hid.

Enter BASSANIO, ANTONIO, GRATIANO, and their followers.

Bassanio. We should hold day with the Antipodes,
If you would walk in absence of the sun.

Por. Let me give light, but let me not be light ;
For a light wife doth make a heavy husband, 130
And never be Bassanio so for me ;
But God sort all ! You are welcome home, my lord.

Bass. I thank you, madam. Give welcome to my
friend.

This is the man, this is Antonio,
To whom I am so infinitely bound. 135

Por. You should in all sense be much bound to him,
For, as I hear, he was much bound for you.

Antonio. No more than I am well acquitted of.

Por. Sir, you are very welcome to our house ;
It must appear in other ways than words, 140
Therefore I scant this breathing courtesy.

Gratiano. [*To NERISSA.*] By yonder moon I swear you
do me wrong ;

In faith, I gave it to the judge's clerk. . . .

Por. A quarrel, ho, already ! What's the matter ?

Gra. About a hoop of gold, a paltry ring 145
That she did give me, whose posy was
For all the world like cutler's poetry
Upon a knife : *Love me, and leave me not.*

Ner. What talk you of the posy or the value ?
You swore to me, when I did give it you, 150
That you would wear it till your hour of death,
And that it would lie with you in your grave.

Though not for me, yet for your vehement oaths,
You should have been respective, and have kept it.
Gave it a judge's clerk! but well I know, 155
The clerk will ne'er wear hair on's face that had it.

Gra. He will, and if he live to be a man.

Ner. Ay, if a woman live to be a man.

Gra. Now, by this hand, I gave it to a youth,
A kind of boy, a little scrubbèd boy, 160
No higher than thyself, the judge's clerk,
A prating boy, that begged it as a fee;
I could not for my heart deny it him.

Por. You were to blame, I must be plain with you,
To part so slightly with your wife's first gift; 165
A thing stuck on with oaths upon your finger
And so riveted with faith unto your flesh.
I gave my love a ring, and made him swear
Never to part with it; and here he stands;
I dare be sworn for him, he would not leave it, 170
Nor pluck it from his finger, for the wealth
That the world masters. Now, in faith, Gratiano,
You give your wife too unkind a cause of grief;
An 'twere to me, I should be mad at it.

Bass. [*Aside*] Why, I were best to cut my left hand off, 175
And swear I lost the ring defending it.

Gra. My Lord Bassanio gave his ring away
Unto the judge that begged it, and indeed
Deserved it too; and then the boy, his clerk,
That took some pains in writing, he begged mine; 180
And neither man nor master would take aught
But the two rings.

Por. What ring gave you, my lord? —
Not that, I hope, which you received of me.

Bass. If I could add a lie unto a fault,
 I would deny it; but you see my finger 185
 Hath not the ring upon it, it is gone.

Por. Even so void is your false heart of truth. . . .

Bass. Sweet Portia,
 If you did know to whom I gave the ring,
 If you did know for whom I gave the ring, 190
 And would conceive for what I gave the ring,
 And how unwillingly I left the ring,
 When nought would be accepted but the ring,
 You would abate the strength of your displeasure.

Por. If you had known the virtue of the ring, 195
 Or half her worthiness that gave the ring,
 Or your own honor to contain the ring,
 You would not then have parted with the ring.
 What man is there so much unreasonable,
 If you had pleased to have defended it 200
 With any terms of zeal, wanted the modesty
 To urge the thing held as a ceremony?
 Nerissa teaches me what to believe:
 I'll die for't but some woman had the ring.

Bass. No, by my honor, madam, by my soul, 205
 No woman had it, but a civil Doctor,
 Which did refuse three thousand ducats of me,
 And begged the ring; the which I did deny him,
 And suffered him to go displeased away;
 Even he that did uphold the very life 210
 Of my dear friend. What should I say, sweet lady?
 I was enforced to send it after him;
 I was beset with shame and courtesy;
 My honor would not let ingratitude
 So much besmear it. Pardon me, good lady; 215

For, by these blessed candles of the night,
Had you been there, I think you would have begged
The ring of me to give the worthy Doctor.

Por. Let not that Doctor e'er come near my house.
Since he hath got the jewel that I loved, 220
And that which you did swear to keep for me,
I will become as liberal as you;
I'll not deny him any thing I have. . . .

Ner. Nor I his clerk; therefore be well advised
How you do leave me to mine own protection. . . . 225

Ant. I am the unhappy subject of these quarrels.

Por. Sir, grieve not you; you are welcome notwithstanding.

Bass. Portia, forgive me this enforcèd wrong;
And, in the hearing of these many friends,
I swear to thee even by thine own fair eyes, 230
Wherein I see myself, —

Por. Mark you but that?
In both my eyes he doubly sees himself;
In each eye, one. Swear by your double self,
And there's an oath of credit.

Bass. Nay, but hear me!
Pardon this fault, and by my soul I swear 235
I never more will break an oath with thee.

Ant. I once did lend my body for his wealth;
Which, but for him that had your husband's ring,
Had quite miscarried. I dare be bound again,
My soul upon the forfeit, that your lord 240
Will never more break faith advisedly.

Por. Then you shall be his surety. Give him this,
And bid him keep it better than the other.

Ant. Here, Lord Bassanio; swear to keep this ring.

Bass. By heaven, it is the same I gave the Doctor! 245

Por. I had it of him; pardon me, Bassanio. . . .

Ner. And pardon me, my gentle Gratiano. . . .

Gra. Why, this is like the mending of high ways
In summer, when the ways are fair enough.

Por. You are all amazed. 250

Here is a letter; read it at your leisure;

It comes from Padua, from Bellario.

There you shall find that Portia was the Doctor,

Nerissa there her clerk: Lorenzo here

Shall witness I set forth as soon as you, 255

And even but now returned; I have not yet

Entered my house. Antonio, you are welcome;

And I have better news in store for you

Than you expect. Unseal this letter soon;

There you shall find three of your argosies 260

Are richly come to harbor suddenly.

You shall not know by what strange accident

I chancèd on this letter.

Ant. I am dumb.

Bass. Were you the Doctor and I knew you not?

Ant. Sweet lady, you have given me life and living; 265

For here I read for certain that my ships

Are safely come to road.

Por. How now, Lorenzo!

My clerk hath some good comforts, too, for you.

Ner. Ay, and I'll give them him without a fee.

There do I give to you and Jessica, 270

From the rich Jew, a special deed of gift,

After his death, of all he dies possessed of.

Lor. Fair ladies, you drop manna in the way

Of starvèd people.

- Por.* It is almost morning,
And yet I am sure you are not satisfied 275
Of these events at full. Let us go in;
And charge us there upon inter'gatories,
And we will answer all things faithfully.
- Gra.* Well, while I live I'll fear no other thing
So sore as keeping safe Nerissa's ring. [*Exeunt.* 280

FINIS



NOTES

Dramatis Personæ

Dramatis Personæ.—Folio¹ has no list of the persons of the drama. Such a list was printed in Q³, 1637. See Introduction (p. xl). It has also been noted in the Introduction (p. xxxix) that the names in the play are of Shakespeare's own choosing. As there is no question of their historical existence few comments are necessary.

Antonio.—This is a happy choice for the name of a typical Venetian merchant. St. Anthony of Padua is nearly as popular in Venice as in his own city near by. It may be noted that his aid is invoked in cases of lost property.

Shylock.—“In *Pepys's Collection of Ballads*, vol. i, p. 38, is one with the title ‘Calebbe Shillocke, his Prophetie; or the Jewes Prediction. To the tune of Bragandarie.’ The second verse begins, ‘And first, within this present yeere, Beeing sixteene hundreth seau’n.’. The existence of the name in the title of this ballad is sufficient to show that it was known in Shakespeare's time.” (Clarendon editors.)

Tubal.—This name comes directly from the Old Testament. (Genesis, iv, 22; x, 2.)

Launcelot Gobbo.—“Gobbo” in Italian means a hump-back, the *Gobbo di Rialto* is a kneeling figure of stone which bears up a short column of Egyptian granite to which steps ascend. It is in the square of San Giacomo di Rialto (see I, i, Setting, n.), and from it were promulgated the laws of the Republic. The word has proverbially a close connection with Venice; a characterization of the various cities in Italy ends with “Venezian gobbo.” (Lean's *Collectanea*, I: 294.)

Did Shakespeare conceive of Launcelot as a hump-back? It is worth noting that the handy man of a Venetian household is (or was in 1903) very often a humpback, known as “Il (the) Gobbo.” Chores are postponed until the Gobbo can do them. Now Launcelot asks (II, ii, 67, 68), “Do I look like a cudgel or a hovel-post, a staff or a prop?” In other words, “Do I look like anything strong and straight?”

Again, did Shakespeare mean to present him as a regular professional fool? It seems not improbable, though it has been objected that Shylock was hardly likely to employ so idle a mouth. But Shylock calls him "patch" (II, v, 46), the recognized name for a fool in motley, and complains of his appetite in the same sentence. Jessica calls him a merry devil who mitigated the dreariness of her father's house. Moreover Launcelot's patter, his oracular but sheer nonsense, his odds and ends of learning, all fit in with the character of a professional fool. When Bassanio orders the livery which for Launcelot was so strong an inducement for change of service he says, "Give him a livery More guarded than his fellows." (II, ii, 151, 152). "Guarded" is ornamented, decorated with stripes. (N.E.D.) May not Bassanio mean that he is to be provided with the fool's professional motley? Taking into consideration Launcelot's eagerness to assume this livery it may be guessed that he had at one time been a professional fool, that he had lost his place through a whim of the great or his own incautious tongue, that in extremity he took menial service with the Jew, but was alert for the first opportunity to return to the lazy, if uneasy, life of a professional merry-maker. That he was a success, at least in Lorenzo's opinion, is clear from III, v, 56-61. The deformed were popular as fools, for deformity was deemed a cause for laughter.

Launcelot's speech has worried the commentators, but their labor is in vain. One might as well try to elucidate *Jaberwocky*. Enjoy it for the plausible nonsense it is.

Stephano. — This name is familiar in Venice as associated with a church in a central location. In Italian it is accented on the first syllable, but Shakespeare puts the accent on the second in V, i, 28.

Portia. — The play itself in the very first scene (l. 165) connects the name with the noble wife of Brutus. The same passage assures us that she is a typical Venetian beauty — a red-gold blonde.

Nerissa. — This name is supposed to be a variant of the Italian *Nericcia* (Pron. *ne-reech-chee-ah*), from *nero*, black, indicating that in contrast to her mistress she is a black-haired, dark-skinned type.

Jessica. — It may be that this name is taken from Genesis, xi, 29, for the name which is spelled Iscah in King James version appears as Jesca in earlier translations. (Elze.) It does not seem probable that Shakespeare would have gone to a long table of genealogy for a name, but it may, of course, have been familiar among the Jews or have

belonged to the old play. "The character of Jessica is so complex, not to say apparently inconsistent, that at times I am almost tempted to think that in her we have an outcropping of the old original play, where it may perhaps have been that she was not the Jew's own daughter. Can we point to a single trait in her that stamps her not only as a daughter of Shylock but even as a Jewess? She is lavish of money to Gobbo, and profusely lavish of it on her own pleasures; she has fallen in love with a gay Christian, and longs to change her religion; she shows no respect for her dead mother, and not an atom of regard for her living father; her very complexion is not oriental, but fair." (Furness.)

Act First

[For the meaning of act, scene, and other terms of dramatic construction, see the edition of *Julius Cæsar*, Appendix, in the Scribner English Classics.]

The First Folio indicates the Act divisions of *The Merchant of Venice* — *Actus Primus*, *Actus Secundus*, etc., but the Scene divisions are not marked except by stage directions for the entrance and exit of the personages. The present Scene divisions are, therefore, determined by the consensus of opinion among later editors working from the suggestions of the stage directions.

Act I. This Act introduces, in three scenes, the three groups which make up the characters of the play. It also establishes the two localities in which the action takes place — Venice and a country place on the mainland. It strikes both the note of business interest and that of romance.

Scene I

Scene I. This scene presents the setting of the play — Venice as a great commercial port; its theme — an episode affecting Venetian trade; the "Merchant Group," — typical citizens engaged in its affairs. It also indicates the connection between this group and the "Belmont Group."

Setting. Venice. A street. As is well known there are no indications of stage setting in the Quartos and Folios. This has left Shakespearian editors and managers a free hand in devising appropriate backgrounds. Charles Kean in 1858

had the curtain rise on a scene in the Place of St. Mark, with various groups of nobles, citizens, travellers, and street vendors, with a ducal procession in the background. But while the Place of St. Mark may well be considered the heart of Venetian social life, her commercial interests centred in the square of San Giacomo di Rialto, where the conversation in this scene would seem to place it.

The actual island of Rialto (Pron. *ree-ahl-to*), so called either because a stream called Prealto flowed into an arm of the Brenta there, or from the height of its banks (It. *rivo*, bank, *alto*, high) was the smallest, but the safest of all the cluster of islands to which the inhabitants of the mainland fled before the Huns. It became the centre not only of Venetian business life but also the centre of the traffic of the civilized world. The campo, or square before San Giacomo (Pron. *ja'-ko-mo*) di Rialto, popularly supposed to be the oldest church in Venice, became the gathering place for merchants, and some shelters were placed there for them. These shelters eventually became covered porticoes which ran around the sides of the square. (Molmenti, *Venice*, I, ch. ii.)

"The Rialto, which is at the farthest side of the bridge as you come from St. Mark's, is a most stately building, being the Exchange of Venice, where the Venetian gentlemen doe meete twice a day; betwixt eleven and twelve of the clocke in the morning, and betwixt five and six of the clocke in the afternoon. This Rialto is of goodly height, built all with brick as the palaces are, adorned with many faire walkes or open galleries that I have before mentioned, and hath a pretty quadrangular court adjoining to it." (Coryat, *Crudities*, 1611.)

1. — In sooth, I know not why I am so sad. This mood of depression at the very outset has been as much of a puzzle to commentators as it was to Antonio himself. But the speech certainly serves to indicate the atmosphere of the play, a comedy only in its happy ending, but serious to the verge of tragedy in its progress. Moreover, the possibility of this mood (or *humor* as the Elizabethans called it), on Antonio's part, a mood of unusual and unexplained melancholy, prepares our minds to accept as plausible the fantastic and ill-judged bargain made by a man who in his ordinary frame of mind was known as a long-headed and successful merchant in a city noted for the importance of its business life.

5. — **I am to learn.** I am (yet) to learn. (Abbott, § 405.)

8. — **argosies.** Historically an argosy is a merchant vessel of the largest size and burden. "A great argosie . . . having streamers and flags verie warlike, with two boats at either sterne." Fleming, *Continuation of Holinshed*, III:313. The name is apparently derived from the city of R  gusa in Dalmatia, which had a very large trade and sent its mighty vessels as far north as England.

9. — **signiors . . . burghers.** That is, the two wealthy and powerful classes — the men of high birth and rank and the rich citizens.

10. — **pageants.** Here the movable structures or wagons on which were conveyed the stage and stage machinery used in the open-air performances of the mystery plays in England.

"The manner of these plays were, every company had his pageant or part (which pageants were a high scaffold with two rooms, a higher and a lower, upon four wheels)." Archd. Rogers. (N. E. D.)

11. — **overpeer.** Here synonymous with "out-peer," to excel, in this sense associated with an obsolete verb "peer," to rival.

12. — **curt'sy.** "Suggested by the rocking, ducking motion of the petty traffickers caused by the wake of the argosy as it sails past them." (Var.)

14. — **venture.** The word was originally "aventure," an enterprise of a business nature involving chances of loss or gain. The initial *a* was probably mistaken for the definite article, hence the aphetic form.

16. — **still.** Constantly, steadily, in accordance with the derivation of the word, "quiet, unmoved." (Abbott, § 69.)

17. — **plucking the grass,** etc. A custom among archers who would toss up a feather or a bit of grass to determine the direction of the wind. The trick is mentioned more than once in the *Toxophilus* of Roger Ascham.

18. — **maps.** "In 1459 the long porticoes of Rialto were adorned with a chart or *mappamondo*, showing the trade routes of Venetian commerce." (Molmenti, I, i, p. 39.) Salanio could thus point out the "ports, and piers, and roads," as he was speaking. Shakespeare may very well have heard of this feature of the Rialto from returned travellers.

26. — **Andrew.** It seems unnecessary to extend conjecture here beyond the obvious guess that it is the name of a ship.

It makes no difference whether her sponsor was St. Andrew or the Genoese naval commander Andrea Doria.

27. — **Vailing.** Lowering. *Cf.* "To see the Spanish carvel vail her top." (Heywood, *Fair Maid of the West*.)

34. — **even now.** But now, used here for an action just past and not in the modern sense of an action still going on. (Abbott, § 38.)

— **worth this.** Is a gesture implied? Perhaps a hand was waved towards the Rialto which stood for the whole commercial power of Venice.

36. — **thought.** The thinking faculty. (N. E. D.)

41. — **bottom.** Ship.

49. — **two-headed Janus.** A Roman divinity regarded as door-keeper of heaven and guardian of all doors, gates, and ports. He is represented with two faces on one head, one looking forward and the other backward. While Salario is probably thinking of the double face as appropriate to his discussion of sad and merry countenances, it is worth noting that Janus was also considered as having jurisdiction over ports, and coins exist having his double face on one side and a ship on the other. The oath is certainly fitting in the mouth of a Venetian man of business.

52. — **Parrots at a bag-piper.** Parrots are always delighted to out-do any insistent strident noise. To bring the allusion up to date replace "bag-piper" with "organ-grinder."

53. — **aspect.** The accent here, as generally in Shakespeare, is on the last syllable.

55. — **Nestor.** One of the Homeric heroes who was valued in his extreme old age for his wisdom and experience. The term is used allusively for a very old man. (See *Love's Labour's Lost*, IV, iii, 169.)

60. — **prevented.** Anticipated, a meaning common in El. E. and close to the Latin derivation.

65. — **laugh.** Have a merry meeting.

66. — **strange.** Distant; *cf.* the colloquial expression "quite a stranger."

69. — **dinner-time.** Noon in El. England.

73. — **have too much respect upon.** Look too much upon. There is here an allusion to the literal meaning of "respect." (Abbott, § 191.)

77. — **a stage.** The Elizabethan interest in the drama made this a favorite figure of speech; *cf.* "She found the

world but a wearisome stage to her, where she played a part against her will." (Sidney, *Arcadia*.) Also the famous speech of Jacques. (*As You Like It*, II, vii, 139-166.) The late Professor Sykes held that Shakespeare's frequent allusions to the stage were intended to heighten the sense of reality to the audience, who hearing the stage spoken of as a thing apart might forget that it was before their eyes.

78. — **play the fool**. Act the part of a jester or fool who for the entertainment of great households counterfeited folly, often using it as a cover for satiric wit.

79. — **old wrinkles**. Those made by advancing years. "When she saw her aged wrinkles." (Golding, *Ovid*, XV, 255.)

81. — **mortifying**. Used here literally to mean groans which kill. This belief that sorrow was immediately dangerous to life is found in *Romeo and Juliet*, III, v, 58, and elsewhere in Shakespeare.

83. — **alabaster**. A fine-grained stone used for the recumbent effigies on tombs to be seen in many English churches.

84, 85. — **creep . . . peevish**. Another instance of the belief in the effect of mental conditions on health.

87. — **are**. Pl. with a collective noun.

88. — **cream and mantle**. Form a scum covering the surface.

91. — **conceit**. See III, iv, 2 n.

92. — **As who should say**. The absolute use of "who." (Abbott, § 257.) The sense is "as much as to say."

— **Sir Oracle**. This playfully contemptuous use of the title is found also in *Winter's Tale*, I, ii, 196; *Troilus and Cressida*, I, iii, 176; *Tempest*, II, i, 286.

101. — **fool gudgeon**. Fool of a gudgeon. The gudgeon is an insignificant fish popular with young and inexperienced anglers because of the greediness with which it bites; cf. "sucker."

107. — **Moe**. More; (A. S. *ma*.)

109. — **gear**. Foolish talk, nonsense; obs. in this sense.

114. — **reasons**. Instances of rational behavior.

123. — **port**. Style of living; rarely so used in Mod. Eng.

125. — **to be abridged**. Bassanio has no mind to change his way of living.

128. — **time**. Time of life; here youth.

129. — **gaged**. Pledged, liable.

132. — **plots and purposes.** This, apparently, means no more than "projects and objects in view." There is no hint of the sinister meaning now implied in "plot," though Bassanio's eye to the main chance is not prepossessing.

136. — **within the eye of honor.** As honor would approve.

140. — **self-same flight.** Weighted and feathered to carry the same distance.

141. — **advisèd.** Considered; hence deliberate, judicious.

142. — **find the other forth.** "Forth" was formerly used in idiomatic constructions with verbs where "out" is now generally used; cf. *Comedy of Errors*, IV, iv, 98. The practice here described seems to have been common among archers, as there are allusions to it by various writers.

143. — **childhood proof.** Childhood's proof. (Abbott, § 430.)

144. — **pure innocence.** Dr. Furness' conjecture (Var.) is that this means "pure foolishness"; Bassanio knew perfectly well that he was inviting Antonio to send good money after bad. Certainly "innocence" does pass in meaning down from "freedom from cunning," to "want of sense." (N. E. D.)

147. — **self.** Same; an obsolete adjectival use of the word.

149. — **As.** For "so." (Abbott, § 110.)

150. — **hazard.** Stake, something risked. Obsolete in this sense. (N. E. D.)

159. — **prest.** Ready, eager.

160. — **Belmont.** See I, ii, Setting.

162. — **sometimes.** Shakespeare uses both "sometime" and "sometimes" in the sense of "formerly." (Abbott, § 68 a.)

165. — **To.** In comparison with. (Abbott, § 187.)

— **Cato's daughter, Brutus' Portia.** An obvious¹ reminiscence of North's *Plutarch*; "Porcia . . . was the daughter of Cato, whom Brutus married."

168. — **sunny locks.** Gold, or red-gold hair was greatly admired in Venice. "No pains were spared to acquire the color and the glint of gold. It is true that the blond was the ideal type of feminine beauty even in the Middle Ages, but it was only in the fifteenth century that it became the fashion to bleach the hair artificially." (Molmenti, *Venice*, II, ii, 92.)

170, 171. — **Colchos' . . . Jasons.** Colchis is a country

in Asia on the eastern coast of the Black Sea. In it was treasured the golden fleece to obtain which Jason made his voyage in the *Argo*. The story, from classical mythology, is related by Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, VII, and in Golding's translation was familiar to Elizabethan readers.

174. — **I have a mind**, etc. I have a mind *which* presages me. In El. E. the relative is frequently omitted, especially when the antecedent clause is emphatic and evidently incomplete. (Abbott, § 244.)

— **thrift**. Success, prosperity.

177. — **neither**. The metre requires the one-syllable pronunciation "nor."

180. — **racked**. Stretched to the utmost; obs. in this sense.

181. — **furnish thee**. Provide for your needs.

184. — **of my trust, or for my sake**. On my credit, as a matter of business, or from personal regard for me.

Scene II

Scene II. As the first scene brought before us the "Merchant Group," so this puts us in touch with the "Belmont Group." We are not only told the conditions on which Portia may be won, but are given glimpses of her character and that of Nerissa.

Setting. Belmont. A room in Portia's house. This stage direction is inferred from I, i, 160, 170. The name Belmont ("Fairmount") is taken from the tale in *Il Pecorone*. But the "seat of Belmont" is a true Venetian villa.

"When the Republic began to enlarge its territory on the mainland, love of the country grew warmer among the Venetians. The æsthetic value of landscape, the rich and shining plain, the grassy hills, acquired a significance which is the outcome of a long and complicated development in culture that the Italians were the first among moderns to appreciate. . . .

"Throughout the Cinquecento, (Pron. *chin-kway-chen'to*, sixteenth century) and especially after the middle, there was great activity in building villas along the Brenta, on the hills of Vicenza and Verona, in the plain of Friuli and in the Marca Trevigiana, which a contemporary calls the garden of Venice. . . .

"The owners of these villas kept open house for their numerous friends who took the pleasures of nature mingled with the refined enjoyment of art. By way of entertainment there was music and games of all sorts. . . .

"The Brenta was the favorite site for the *villeggiatura* (Pron. *vil-lej-ja-too'rah*, country life) owing to the facility with which it could be reached by boat across the lagoon, touching at the river's mouth at Fusina or Lizzafusina. From Moranzan . . . all the way to Padua, the banks of the Brenta were set with sumptuous palaces." (Molmenti, *Venice*, II, ii, pp. 66 ff.)

Taking into consideration the passage III, iv, 45-55, it may be inferred that Belmont was conceived as one of the palaces mentioned in the last paragraph.

1. — **By my troth.** By my truth, my good faith.

— **awearry.** Utterly weary; *a-* as prefix before an adjective is intensive.

7, 8. — **mean . . . mean.** A play on the double sense of the word; it is no contemptible happiness to be seated in the middle ground between poverty and riches; *cf.* Proverbs xxx, 8; also III, v, 68 *n.*

8, 9. — **superfluity . . . competency.** Nerissa's meaning has been much discussed, but there seems no difficulty if it is thus taken — "the effort to attain superfluity brings a premature appearance of age, but contentment with modest competency has really a longer life."

10. — **sentences.** Aphorisms, trite sayings; *obs.* in this sense.

18. — **blood.** Passions.

20. — **meshes.** Hunting with nets was practised from early days.

28-33. — **inspiration . . . love.** Dr. H. H. Furness (*Var.*) offered a convincing emendation of this puzzling passage. "Holy men . . . have good inspirations, therefore [*i.e.* hence there is] the lottery that he hath devised . . . whereof who chooses his meaning chooses you. No doubt you will never," etc.

38. — **description.** Here we have the conventional Elizabethan conception of various nationalities: — the horsey Neapolitan, the volatile Frenchman, the tongue-tied Englishman with foreign affectations, the touchy Scot in close alliance with France, and the sottish German.

41. — **horse.** Neapolitans were called the schoolmasters of all Europe in the art of horsemanship, but it was, naturally, an art rather undervalued in Venice. Castiglione, final authority on good manners in the sixteenth century, could find nothing worse to say of a horseman than that he rode "in the Venetian fashion."

44. — **County Palatine.** County — count; a Count Palatine is a prince who exercises certain prerogatives of royalty. As Elizabethan England received more than one Count Palatine as guest the description may have some special point.

46. — **choose.** Take your own course.

47, 48. — **weeping philosopher.** Heraclitus, a Greek (540-475, B.C.), acquired this nickname because it was said that he always found in human life matter for tears, whereas another philosopher, Democritus, found rather matter for laughter.

50. — **death's-head with a bone in his mouth.** Skull and cross-bones.

53. — **by.** Concerning.

58. — **better bad habit.** The comment (Var.) that this should be read "better bad-habit" seems reasonable.

60. — **throstle.** Thrush; now used only in literature or dialect.

— **a-capering.** "A hath also the force of governing before a noun." Ben Jonson. Here *a* = *on*. In El. E. "on" represents juxtaposition of any kind. (Abbott, § 140, 180.)

68, 69. — **Latin, French, nor Italian.** Is this meant as indicating the minimum linguistic acquirement for a man of culture, or is it a sly dig at the insular difficulty in acquiring foreign tongues? (Stanton.)

71. — **proper man's picture.** The picture of a man as he should be; for this meaning of "proper" see N. E. D.

72. — **dumb-show.** A part of the early drama represented by action without speech; cf. *Hamlet*, III, ii, 14.

73. — **How oddly he is suited!** How many kinds of clothes he wears. "Odd" may mean "unconnected," "irregular" in El. E. Contemporary writers make constant fun of the tendency of young Englishmen to return from their travels clad in samples of the styles of all the countries they visited.

80. — **his surety.** An allusion to the readiness of France to side with Scotland in her quarrels with England.

90, 91, 92. — **should . . . should . . . should.** “‘Should’ used in both conditional and consequent clause.” (Abbott, § 322.)

94. — **Rhenish.** The vineyards along the Rhine produced famous wine.

104. — **Sibylla.** An allusion to the Cumæan Sibyl who having asked long life from Apollo forgot to include eternal youth in her petition. Golding’s *Ovid*, XIV, ll. 151–181.

112. — **Montferrat.** A territory in Italy, south of the Po and east of Turin. Its rulers figured prominently in the Crusades, as readers of Scott’s *Talisman* will remember.

116. — **foolish.** Humble, insignificant; a sense now archaic.

121. — **four.** This number is interesting because *six* strangers have already been mentioned. It is probable that we have here a phrase from the old play overlooked by Shakespeare in the re-making. See Introduction, p. xxxiii.

127. — **condition.** Attribute, quality, now obsolete in this sense.

128. — **complexion.** Of a devil, proverbially black.

130. — **whiles.** “While” was originally a noun meaning “time”; “whiles” is its genitive meaning of or during the time. (Abbott, § 137.)

Scene III

Scene III. This scene completes Act I. It depicts the nature and practices of those who make up the “Ghetto Group,” and so rounds out our knowledge of the characters of the play.

1. — **Three thousand ducats.** — These first words of Shylock and his appearance in “Jewish gaberdine” show us not only how large is the sum involved but also reveal the fact that Antonio, after racking his credit to the uttermost, has had to stoop to transactions with a Jewish usurer. He must have come to this only after vain trial of other and more acceptable means of raising money, and his speech (ll. 59–62) reveals the struggle in his mind.

— **ducats.** The name “ducat” was first applied to a Venetian gold coin in the thirteenth century. The name of this coin was changed to “sequin” in 1543, and in 1561 the name ducat was applied to a silver coin which became the ideal medium of exchange. (Molmenti, *Venice*, I, i, 156–160.)

It was worth about a dollar, but in consideration of the greater purchasing power of money in the sixteenth century three thousand ducats was a very substantial sum.

4. — **the which**. The article is used to make definite an indefinite adjective. (Abbott, § 270.)

7. — **may you stead me?** Can you be of use to me? "May" originally meant "to be able"; *cf.* Ger. *mögen*. (Abbott, § 307.)

26. — **bond**. An old complaint in Venice was that the Jews refused to lend money on bonds and insisted on pledges of gold, silver, and jewels. So much of these had accumulated in their hands that in 1395 the Jews were expelled from Venice and forbidden to return for longer than fifteen days. They retired to Mestre, just across on the mainland (see Introduction, p. xxxiii), but of course returned little by little and were at last relegated to a Ghetto in 1516. The old cause of dispute probably continued also and would explain some things in this scene — Shylock's reluctant "I may take his bond . . . that I may be assured, I will bethink me," and the feeling on the part of the two Venetians that Shylock was, on the whole, unusually obliging. It also throws light on Shylock's agonies over his gold and jewels (II, viii and III, i).

32. — **pork**. The Jewish ceremonial law, as is well known, forbade the eating of swine. (Leviticus, xi, 7.)

33. — **your prophet**. Christ. The story alluded to is found in Matthew, viii, 28–34.

— **Nazarite**. Inhabitant of Nazareth, Nazarene. The word is so given in early translations of the Bible. (Matthew, ii, 23.)

35. — **I will not eat**. It had not yet occurred to him that by doing so he could feed on the prodigal Christian, *cf.* II, v, 14, 15. (Pooler.)

39. — **fawning publican**. No really satisfactory explanation of this curious phrase has been offered. The publican, or Roman tax-collector, was always hated by the Jews, as many passages in the Gospels show, but why a publican should fawn, or why Shylock should compare the money-careless Antonio to a tax-collector, is not clear.

40. — **for**. Because. (Abbott, § 151.)

41. — **simplicity**. Folly. *Cf.* "Simple truth miscall'd simplicity." Sonnet LXVI.

43. — **usance**. It would appear from a passage in *Wylson*

on *Usurie* (1572, p. 32) that usance was considered "a more cleanly name" for usury. (Reed.)

44. — upon the hip. At a disadvantage; a phrase derived from wrestling.

53. — gross. Short for "gross sum."

60. — of. "*Of* naturally followed a verbal noun. In many cases we should call the noun a participle and the *of* has become unintelligible to us." (Abbott, § 178.)

61. — ripe. Requiring immediate attention.

62. — is he yet posses'd. Does he yet know? (Abbott, § 295.)

67. — methought. It seemed to me; the past of the obsolete verb *think*, meaning "appear" or "seem," used impersonally.

68. — upon advantage. With interest.

70-72. — Jacob . . . third possessor. It is not without significance that Shylock recounts with relish the crafty device of Jacob who was, to say the least, the most astute business man among the patriarchs. The "help of his wise mother," Rebecca, whereby she gained for Jacob the place of third possessor after Abraham, which rightfully belonged to his brother Esau, is recounted in Genesis, xxvii.

75. — directly. Precisely; cf. *Twelfth Night*, III, iv, 73.

— what Jacob did. This instance of Jacob's craft and skill in outwitting his uncle Laban, who was quite as tricky if less skilful, is taken directly from Genesis, xxx, 25-43.

76. — compromised. Come to an agreement.

77. — eanlings. New-born lambs.

79. — me. In virtue of representing the old dative; "me" is often used in El. E. as "for me." (Abbott, § 220.) We still say "do me a favor."

81. — eaning time. Time of bringing forth lambs.

82. — Fall. Drop, give birth to; obs. in this sense.

88. — inserted. Does Antonio mean inserted in the Scriptures or inserted in Shylock's narrative?

92. — The devil. An allusion to Matthew, iv, 6, where the devil quotes Psalm xci, 11, 12.

94. — villain. Cf. *Hamlet*, I, v, 108.

96. — goodly. Many critics, among them Pope, Rowe, and Theobald, believe that this should read "godly," thus bringing the closing sentence of this speech very close to the opening statement concerning the devil.

99. — **beholding**. Beholden, obliged; for this use of *-ing* see Abbott, § 372.

101. — **rated**. Reproved me vehemently; of obscure origin. (N. E. D.)

103. — **Still**. Always.

104. — **sufferance**. Patient endurance, long suffering.

— **badge**. *Cf.*

By the Ghetto's plague, by the garb's disgrace,
By the badge of shame, by the felon's place.

Browning, *Holy Cross Day*.

105. — **dog**. "Dog" has a peculiarly insulting sound to an Oriental ear, for in the East dogs are regarded as outcasts and scavengers rather than companions and friends. *Cf.* "Is thy servant a dog that he should do this thing?" II Kings, viii, 13.

106. — **Jewish gaberdine**. A gaberdine is a loose and ample upper garment but it does not appear that any special cut of gaberdine was worn by Jews. It is probable that the word is here used in the general sense of "garment." (N. E. D.)

111. — **rheum**. Spittle.

112. — **foot me**. Kick me, spurn me.

119. — For the scansion see Abbott, § 499.

121. — **for these courtesies**. This speech affords great opportunity to a great actor. A past generation rejoiced to recall Keane's effectiveness in it, and there are people to-day willing to be old enough to recall Booth and Irving.

127. — **breed for barren metal**. That usury was against nature because gold and silver cannot breed was a common argument which gains additional point here by the implicit reference to Antonio's scorn of Shylock's method as expressed above (1. 90).

129. — **break**. Fail to meet his obligation on the day appointed.

130. — **how you storm!** Shylock, who has risen to bitter irony over the injuries done his nation, cringes with his usual "sufferance" under Antonio's repudiation of any connection with him but that of business.

132. — **stained**. Literally as well as figuratively. See above, 1. 106.

133. — **doit**. A trifling sum; originally a small Dutch

coin once used in England and worth half a farthing, or a quarter of a cent.

137. — **notary.** “Divers officers . . . called Notaries . . . to accepte take and recorde the Knowledge of all contractes.” Act 5, *Henry VIII.* (N. E. D.)

Dr. M. Jastrow (*Young Israel*, March, 1876) is inclined to think that Shylock at this point had no idea beyond that of a bitter jest, a chance to humiliate his enemy, and that it was Jessica's flight and robbery that made his mood murderous. (Var.) But compare the speech, “I'll go in hate,” etc. (II, v, 14), which antedates Jessica's offence.

138. — **single.** Much legal erudition has been expended upon the legal question of a “single bond” *vs.* a “bond without condition”: Shylock calls the bond “single” and it is most certainly a bond with condition. If the question of legal phraseology be waived, the fact that “single” may mean “individual” as contrasted with a number of persons or things clears up the matter. (N. E. D.) Antonio is to give a bond entirely on his own account.

142. — **for.** Here “nearly redundant.” (Abbott, § 148.)

— **an equal pound.** Exactly a pound; an obsolete sense of equal.

154. — **teaches.** The third person plural in -s is extremely common, especially in Folio¹. (Abbott, § 333.)

— **suspect.** To suspect. (Abbott, § 349.)

163. — **for my love.** This passage has been variously punctuated and interpreted. It seems to imply that, even if Shylock's offer is refused, at least let not his kind intention be suspected of harboring guile. Antonio is touched by this appeal. (See below, l. 178.)

168. — **fearful.** Not to be trusted. Adjectives in -ful have both an active and passive meaning in El. E. (Abbott, § 3.)

Act Second

The First Act made us familiar with the *Dramatis Personæ* in three groups. In this act the plot is built up. Bassanio's way to Portia is gradually cleared of rivals, and the love affair of Lorenzo and Jessica, destined to goad Shylock to desperation, begins. The low comedy is also introduced.

Scene I

Scene I. The beginning of the end of Bassanio's rivals.

5. — **Phœbus.** The Greek name for the sun god, Apollo, is very commonly used in El. E. for the sun itself. *Cf.* "warmth of Phebus beames." (Golding's *Ovid*, 1:499.)

7. — **reddest.** In El. E. the superlative is sometimes used when only two acts or things are compared. (Abbott, § 10.)

8. — **aspèct.** See above, I, i, 53 *n.*

9. — **feared.** In A.S. and El. E. "fear" was transitive and meant to frighten. *Cf.* "afeard," II, vii. 29.

14. — **nice.** Fastidious.

17. — **scanted me.** Limited me. *Cf.* *King Lear*, I, i, 281.

18. — **wit.** In El. E. this word had a wider sense than today. Here it has the meaning of sound sense and judgment.

19. — **His wife who.** "His" as the genitive of "he" may stand in El. E. as the antecedent of a relative. (Abbott, § 218.)

20. — **stood as fair.** There is here, probably, a verbal quibble on Morocco's complexion.

25. — **Sophy.** This was the surname of the ruling dynasty of Persia, from the sixteenth to the middle of the eighteenth century, and became therefore a designation of the ruler of Persia. (N. E. D.) There is a marked resemblance between Morocco's boast and a passage in the play of *Soliman and Perseda*, I, iii, 51. See Introduction, p. xxxvi.

29. — **sucking cubs from the she-bear.** A bear with cubs has been a symbol of ferocity from very early times. *Cf.* "They be chafed in their minds, as a bear robbed of her whelps in the field." II Sam. xvii, 8.

32. — **Hercules and Lichas.** Master and man. Lichas was page to Hercules.

35. — **Alcides.** Hercules, so called because he was the grandson of Alcæus.

— **page.** Theobald's emendation of "rage" in Quartos and Folios.

42. — **In way.** In the way. "The" in El. E. is frequently omitted in prepositional phrases. (Abbott, § 89.)

43. — **Nor will not.** Double negative is common in El. E.

44. — **temple.** This word has puzzled commentators. As there is no point in the mention of a place of worship it

has been proposed to emend it to "table" (Keightley), which is hardly clearer. The present editor suggests that "temple" here means "casino" (It. Pron. *kah-zee'no*), the pleasure house in the garden. Such houses are common in the grounds of Italian villas and their style is often that of a small temple, either round or with a colonnaded front. A miniature in the Maggi M. S. (Nat'l Lib., Paris) shows such a building in the grounds of a sixteenth-century villa with a supper party in progress. In large establishments the *casino* was often a repository for objects of art. Portia simply invites Morocco to a meal in the summer house where the caskets are kept and where the hazard can conveniently be made. The "garden-house" in *Measure for Measure*, V, i, 212, seems to indicate just such a building.

Scene II

Scene II. This scene introduces the low comedy business of the play, indicates the Gratiano-Nerissa under-plot, and, in the last line but one, hints at the complication which is to culminate in the Lorenzo-Jessica episode.

1. — **serve me.** Be on my side, favor my real wish.

3. — **Gobbo, Launcelot Gobbo.** See *Dramatis Personæ*.

10. — **Via.** (It. *via*, (Pron. *vee'ah*), away.) The word was used in Shakespeare's time to encourage a horse to speed.

11. — **for the heavens.** For heaven's sake.

16. — **grow to.** A dialect expression used of milk burned at the bottom of a pot.

22, 23. — **God bless the mark.** An exclamatory phrase probably originally serving as a formula to avert an evil omen, hence made by way of apology for something perhaps better left unsaid. Launcelot displays the very common reluctance to speak of the devil.

26. — **devil incarnation.** Presumably Launcelot means "devil incarnate."

32. — **Master young-man.** — "Master" was formerly a title of respect indicating either high social rank or learning.

35. — **sand-blind.** Half blind. "High-gravel blind" seems to be the comparative degree of "sand-blind" in Launcelot's phraseology.

36. — **confusions.** It is not worth while to discuss in detail all of Launcelot's plausible blunders.

42. — **of hand.** On hand. In El. E. "of" has often a local significance. (Abbott, § 165.)

44. — **sonties.** Saints.

48. — **raise the waters.** Bring the tears.

51, 52. — **poor man . . . well to live.** "Well to live" is "well to do." Launcelot comes honestly by his "confusions."

55. — **and Launcelot.** Again Old Gobbo shows himself Launcelot's "true-begotten father"; he is as determined not to give his son a title as the latter is to have it.

59. — **ergo.** Therefore (Latin). Used in logic to mark the conclusion of a syllogism. Launcelot's undertaking to chop logic is a crowning absurdity.

60. — **father.** Here simply a title of respect: Launcelot has not proclaimed his identity.

61. — **Fates and Destinies . . . Sisters Three.** In classical mythology three Fates, or Goddesses, determined the course of human life. Launcelot proudly produces a scrap of learning.

67, 68. — **a staff or a prop.** If a humpback Launcelot would certainly look like neither. See *Dramatis Personæ*.

86. — **your.** Old Gobbo uses the formal "you" while he conceives himself speaking with a stranger. When he is convinced of Launcelot's identity he drops into the familiar "thou," l. 91.

92. — **Lord worshipped, etc.** Here merely an exclamation; originally a comma may have come after "Lord."

94. — **fill-horse.** Shaft-horse.

96, 97. — **of . . . of.** "On," as in l. 42.

101, 102. — **set up my rest.** Resolved, determined.

107. — **me.** Here represents the old dative and means "to me." (Abbott, § 220.)

112. — **hasted.** Hurried up.

119. — **Gramercy.** Very many thanks. (Fr. *grand*, great, *merci*, thanks.)

123. — **infection.** A mistake for "affection," which in El. E. meant "inclination."

128. — **cater-cousins.** Those not related by blood but intimate as blood-kin, hence those who are on terms of close friendship. (Derivation and original literal meaning uncertain. N. E. D.)

131. — **frutify.** In Launcelot's lingo "notify."

132. — **dish of doves.** Doves enough to fill a dish. Were the doves from Gobbo's own dove-cot? Visitors to Venice have often wondered whether the famous doves of the Piazza of St. Mark's did not on occasion serve some magnate's table.

143. — **preferr'd . . . preferment.** Promoted, promotion.

146. — **old proverb.** "The grace of God is gear enough."

149. — **speak'st it.** "It" in El. E. is sometimes used indefinitely as the object of a verb without referring to anything previously mentioned. *Cf.* "fight it out."

152. — **guarded.** Trimmed, striped. For the possible connection of this specially designed livery see *Dramatis Personæ*.

155. — **table.** An expression used in palmistry to designate a quadrangular space between certain lines on the hand. Launcelot's palmistry is no more trustworthy than his vocabulary.

156. — **Go to.** "Go" did not in El. E. necessarily imply motion from, but motion generally. Hence "go to" meant little more than "come, come." "To" is here an adverb; *cf.* "heave to."

157. — **simple line . . . wives.** "Long and deep lines from the mount of Venus towards the line of life signifieth so many wives. . . . These lines visible and deep, so many wives the party shall have." (Saunders' *Chiromancie*, Halliwell.)

159. — **coming-in.** Income; to call such a wealth of matrimony "simple" is in keeping with the rest of Launcelot's nonsense.

176. — **you . . . thee.** Bassanio drops into the familiar form of address when he begins to scold in friendly fashion. This use of "thee" for "thou" with emphatic imperatives is ascribed by Abbott to euphony. (Abbott, § 212.)

181. — **something too liberal.** Somewhat too unrestrained.

— **Pray thee.** I pray thee. (Abbott, § 402.)

184. — **misconstrued.** Accent on the second syllable.

186. — **habit.** Demeanor. Words indicating garments are frequently used figuratively of a state of mind. *Cf.* "clothed with humility."

188. — **Wear prayer-books.** — Printed books were once novelties, it must be remembered, and gallants bore about a miniature edition of the sonnets of Petrarch while the pious

favoured books of devotion. "He was very religious, too, never without a book at his belt." Greene, *Groatsworth of Wit* (Pooler.)

192. — **ostent.** Demonstration.

Scene III

Scene III. In this scene we discover the relation of the low-comedy character — Launcelot — to the plot, and the dramatic purpose of his change of service.

5. — **soon at supper.** There seems no reason to take this as having any meaning outside the ordinary modern one, but it is true that in El. E. it might mean during the early part of supper.

10. — **exhibit.** Presumably Launcelot means "inhibit," though it is hard to believe that even tears would affect his powers of speech to any great extent.

Scene IV

Scene IV. The hint of II, ii, 201 is here developed into the sub-plot of Lorenzo and Jessica, the effect of which is to blow Shylock's smouldering wrath into flame.

1. — **in.** During; frequently so used in El. E.

5. — **spoke.** El. E. tended to drop the earlier inflection of the past participle *-en*, even where it is retained in modern usage. (Abbott, § 343.)

— **us.** See II, ii, 107 *n*.

— **torch-bearers.** Owing to imperfect lighting, torches and torch-bearers had an important place in all evening functions, in doors or out; *cf.* *Romeo and Juliet*, I, iv.

6. — **vile.** Cheap, not worth doing.

— **quaintly.** Ingeniously, artistically; obs. in this sense.

10. — **break up.** A regular term with huntsmen, signifying the carving of the game; here there is probably a playful allusion both to Lorenzo's pursuit of Jessica and to the cutting open of the letter.

15. — **By your leave, sir.** Launcelot thus asks permission to go.

22. — **masque.** "Masquerades were of common occurrence even out of Carnival time, at feasts and banquets in private houses. . . . Carnival gradually came to be more

and more thronged with masqueraders. . . . Every one without distinction — noble, plebeian, courtesan alike — delighted to slip on the masque and make merry at San Marco or at Santo Stefano, pelting each other with eggs filled with scented waters." (Molmenti, II, i, 76.)

23. — **provided of.** "Of" frequently follows verbs in the sense of "with." (Abbott, § 171.)

26. — **some hour.** About an hour.

32. — **page's suit.** Disguisings of all sorts figure in the plots of Elizabethan fiction as well as drama, and no disguising is more popular than that of the girl as page. Fantastic as it seems to us, it was not in reality very remote from everyday life. For convenience as well as safety women assumed masculine dress when travelling. Mary Stuart had availed herself of it, and the Scotch ambassador Melville actually suggested it to Queen Elizabeth. (Jusserand, *Literary History of the English People*, Bk. V, ch. vii.)

39. — **shall be.** Is sure to be. "Shall" was used in El. E. in all three persons to denote inevitable futurity without reference to will (desire). (Abbott, § 315.)

Scene V

Scene V. Shylock's irritable and suspicious frame of mind revealed in this scene sustains the suspense between the last scene and the culmination of Jessica's story in the next.

3. — **gormandise.** That Shylock's economy affected his housekeeping appears not only from this line but from l. 46. That there is a vast difference between Shylock's conception of rations and Launcelot's is evident when this line is compared with II, ii, 104–106.

17. — **a-brewing.** Cf. "afoot" and "asleep" in Mod. E. (Abbott, § 140.)

18. — **dream of money-bags.** As dreams are supposed to go by contraries no worse augury could have been imagined by Shylock.

20, 21. — **reproach . . . his.** Shylock plays upon Launcelot's characteristic blunder.

22. — **And.** Probably here equal to "if." (Abbott, § 101.)

24. — **nose fell a-bleeding.** An omen generally regarded as unfavorable, as is shown by numerous passages in El. literature.

25. — **Black Monday.** Easter Monday, so known because of Easter Monday, April 14, 1360, when Edward III was with his army before Paris and many of his men died of cold. (Stowe.)

30. — **wry-neck'd fife.** — There is much dispute among commentators as to whether the instrument or the player on it is here intended. In support of the latter there is a passage in Barnaby Rich, *Aphorismes* (1606): "A fife is a wry-neckt musician, for he always looks away from his instrument." (Var.)

33. — **varnished faces.** Faces disguised with masks.

35. — **foppery.** Folly, imbecility; obs. in this sense.

36. — **Jacob's staff.** See Genesis, xxxii, 10.

37. — **of feasting forth.** For feasting away from home. (Abbott, § 174.)

42. — **Jew's eye.** A common expression — "dear as a Jew's eye."

44. — **Hagar's offspring.** Offspring of a bondwoman, a slave. (Genesis, xvi.)

46. — **patch.** See *Dramatis Personæ*.

Scene VI

Scene VI. The culmination of the Lorenzo-Jessica story.

2. — **pent-house.** A shed having a sloping roof; here, apparently, the shelter over a doorway. (O. Fr. *apentis*, shed.)

5. — **Venus' pigeons.** The dove was sacred to the goddess of love and fabled to go on her errands.

7. — **obliged.** Plighted; obs. in this sense.

10-12. — **horse, etc.** This figure of speech can be understood only when it is known that the Italian fashion of training a horse in "manage" was much in vogue in El. England. It involved teaching a horse to pace, trot, or gallop a good while to and fro in one path, turning at each end either with a single turn, whole turn, or double turn. (*Shakespeare's England*, Ch. XXVII, pt. 6. Sieveking.)

14. — **younger.** Youngster.

— **prodigal.** It is difficult to believe that in using this word Shakespeare had not the parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke, xv, 11-32) in mind.

15. — **scarfèd.** Decorated as with scarfs. So all com-

mentators interpret this word, and the passage, *All's Well*, II, iii, 214, gives them support. But it may be also noted that in ship-building to "scarf" is to join in a special manner intended to resist the strain of the sea. In this sense "scarfèd bark" would be one well built and strongly bolted starting on her maiden voyage, but returning with joints loosened by stress of weather.

21. — **abode.** Delay.

23. — **When you shall please.** When it shall please you. (Abbott, § 297.)

30. — **who.** The inflection "whom" is frequently neglected in El. E.

40. — **must.** Abbott (§ 314) thinks "must" here means only definite futurity without sense of compulsion. But does not Lorenzo mean that Jessica's only chance of escape is to be his torch-bearer?

44. — **should be.** Ought to be. (Abbott, § 323.)

45. — **garnish.** Dress.

46. — **close.** Concealing.

50. — **by my hood.** An obsolete asseveration of uncertain reference.

— **a Gentile and no Jew.** Considering that the preceding speech of Jessica is in character with the proverbial money-loving attitude of a Jew, one wonders whether Gratiano is speaking ironically.

51. — **Beshrew me.** This imprecatory expression, originally invoking a curse, seems to have weakened with use and is here used merely by way of emphasis.

— **but I love.** If I do not love. (Abbott, § 126.)

63. — **the wind is come about,** etc. These closing lines give us warning of the shift of scene to Belmont and remind us that to reach it one leaves the narrow streets of Venice, crowded on islands, and sets sail for the wide spaces of the mainland.

Scene VII

Scene VII. Here we return to the casket story, learn the contents of the golden casket and the fate of one unsuccessful wooer.

Setting. As has been stated (p. 99), the directions for settings are the work of successive editors. Taking into consideration the "temple" mentioned by Portia (*cf.* II, i, 44 *n.*), we may

picture this scene in a summer-house in the gardens of Belmont.

1. — **discover**. Uncover. (Abbott, § 439.)

4. — **who**. In El. E. "who" with an inanimate antecedent is not uncommon.

5, 7, 9. — These lines are Alexandrines, *i.e.* with six accents each. Abbott (§ 501) calls them couplets of three accents each, with the division after "gain," "get," "give," respectively.

8. — **blunt**. There seems to be a double meaning here: as blunt as lead and as blunt a warning as either of the others.

20. — **shows**. Manifest appearance.

26. — **estimation**. Reputation.

29. — **afear**. Afraid, past participle of the obsolete verb "afear," rare in literature after the seventeenth century, but still in occasional colloquial use.

40. — **shrine**. Image; the container for the contained.

41. — **Hyrcanian**. "Hyrcania that land hath in the east side the sea Caspius, in the South Armenia, in the north Albania, and in the west Iberia." (Ralph Higden, *Polychronicon* tr. Trevisa.) This is Hyrcania as conceived by the Elizabethans. It would be difficult to place on a modern map.

51. — **rib**. To enclose as with ribs. The reference is to the sheet of lead in which a dead body was wrapped over the cerecloth.

— **cerecloth**. The waxed sheet in which a dead body was wrapped for interment.

56. — **coin . . . angel**. Called more fully an angel-noble, as it was a new issue of the noble showing the archangel Michael overcoming the dragon. It was first struck by Edward IV, the device being taken from a French coin. It was worth about ten shillings. The name afforded endless opportunity for the punning propensities of the Elizabethans.

57. — **insculp'd**. Engraved. The meaning seems to be that whereas the angel's figure is on top of the gold of the coin it is here beneath the gold of the casket.

61. — **form**. Representation, likeness.

65. — **glisters**. Glistens. The proverb used is old and familiar.

69. — **tombs do**. Johnson's emendation for "timber do" of the Quartos.

71. — “It would seem the ‘as . . . so’ are both to be implied from the preceding line.” (Abbott, § 275.)

73. — **suit is cold.** “A proverbial saying.” (Pooler.)

77. — **part.** Depart. Cf. *Two Gentlemen*, I, i, 71.

Scene VIII

Scene VIII. Here we have the first hint of the tragic outcome of the “merry bond” of I, iii.

4. — **raised.** Roused.

8. — **gondola.** (Ital. Pron. *gon'do-lah.*) The characteristic boat of the Venetian lagoons. It is a long black skiff, “in no sense an invention; it is a growth directed by the needs of its native place.” There is an engraving in a rare book of 1580 which is entitled, *This is the way a bride goes in her gondola*, which shows a wedding party crossing the lagoons. (H. F. Brown, *Life on the Lagoons*, Chap. II.) Perhaps this speech of Salarino's indicates that so far from hiding, Lorenzo and Jessica were showing themselves in conventional fashion.

15. — **my daughter . . . my ducats.** Misers, especially miserly Jews, were commonly supposed to hold their goods as comparable in value to their families.

16. — **Christian ducats!** Taken originally from Christians they had become Christian again.

19. — **double ducats.** “Single and double ducats which are the emperor's coin.” Coryat, *Crudities*, II, 68, ed. 1776. (Pooler.)

25. — **keep his day.** Cf. I, iii, 156.

27. — **reasoned.** Conversed; obs. in this sense.

28. — **the narrow seas.** See III, i, 4 *n.*

30. — **fraught.** Laden.

39. — **slubber.** To do things carelessly. Cf. the vernacular “slob.”

42. — **mind of love.** There is some question as to the meaning of this phrase. The choice is between “loving mind,” and “mind, of love” (*i.e.* for love's sake).

44. — **to.** After “employ” “to” seems to convey the idea of sending the thought forward. Cf. *Antony and Cleopatra*, V, ii, 70. (N. E. D.)

— **ostents.** Manifestations.

46. — **there.** At that juncture.

48. — **sensible.** Full of feeling.

52. — **embracèd.** Cherished. *Cf.* the common expression "to hug sorrow."

Scene IX

Scene IX. This scene disposes of the silver casket, and clears the way for Bassanio. His success is foreshadowed in the closing lines. The succession of wooers and casket scenes help us to believe that three months (I, iii, 2) elapse before Bassanio's success.

3. — **election.** Selection.

6. — **straight.** At once.

18. — **addressed.** Prepared.

25. — **by.** Concerning.

— **fool.** *Cf.* I, i, 101 *n.*

26. — **fond.** Foolish.

27. — **martlet.** Black martin or swift; these birds "fix their nests to rocks, lofty church windows, and the tops of towers." (Turner, *History of the Principal Birds*, etc., 1544.)

29. — **force.** Onset.

— **road.** Either "highway" (N. E. D.), or "hostile incursion," *cf.* *Coriolanus*, III, i, 5, *Henry V*, I, ii, 138.

— **casualty.** Disaster.

31. — **jump.** Agree.

37. — **cozen.** Cheat. Derivation uncertain.

45. — **peasantry.** Rusticity.

47. — **ruin.** Apparently this means "refuse," "waste."

52. — It was Capell's suggestion that this line is an aside. Portia could hardly have so failed in courtesy to a guest, however unwelcome, as to twit him openly.

54. — **schedule.** Scroll.

60, 61. — "You have been sentenced but not insulted: there is nothing personal in the decision." (Pooler.)

67. — **iwis.** Assuredly, the form in El. E. of the E. E. "y-wis."

71. — **sped.** Finished; done for. Perhaps there is also an ironical suggestion of "speed the parting guest."

77. — **wroth.** Calamity. An irregular spelling of "ruth" meaning "ruin." (N. E. D.)

79. — **deliberate fools.** Those who conduct their love affairs with the head rather than with the heart are likely to come to grief.

84. — **my lord.** Dyce calls attention to other passages in Shakespeare where such a sportive rejoinder is made to an inferior; *I Henry IV*, II, iv, 314, 315; *Richard II*, V, v, 67.

85. — **alighted at your gates.** Bassanio's party, having reached the mainland, evidently sent a messenger by the land route.

88. — **regreets.** Greetings.

89. — **commends.** Compliments.

91. — **likely.** Handsome; still in use colloquially.

93. — **costly.** Lavish.

97. — **high-day.** Confused with heyday, a state of exaltation of spirit.

Act Third

This act develops the theme of Antonio's losses, finishes the Casket Story, and contains the climax of the play, that is, the indication of its denouement, when Portia proposes to solve the bond problem.

Scene I

Scene I. This scene shows that Antonio's losses are likely to lead to the forfeiture of his bond; Shylock receives that news at the same time as he hears of the extravagance of Jessica, so that his passion for revenge meets the opportunity of satisfying it.

2. — **yet . . . unchecked.** Up to this time uncontradicted.

4. **narrow seas;—the Goodwins.** The Goodwin Sands are a dangerous line of shoals at the entrance of the Strait of Dover from the North Sea. They are shifting and partially exposed at low water, and have been the scene of innumerable wrecks. Salarino's hesitation about the name of a place well known in England would give an English audience a sense of foreign environment.

9. — **knapped.** "Knap" is to gnaw noisily. Knapping ginger seems to have been a favorite occupation with old women; cf. *Measure for Measure*, IV, iii, 8, 9.

28. — **complexion.** Nature.

29. — **dam.** Used for the mother bird. Cf. *Macbeth*, IV, iii, 218.

30. — **damned**. A grewsome pun.
 40. — **match**. Bargain. *Cf. Taming of the Shrew*, V, ii, 74.

40, 41. — **bankrupt . . . prodigal**. To Shylock there can be no extravagance more certain to lead to ruin than lending money without interest.

42. — **smug**. Well-dressed, neat. Our modern "well-groomed" probably best conveys the sense of the word here.

56. — **dimensions**. Material parts.

74. — **matched**. Put together so as to form a set.

75. — **Genoa**. The famous seaport on the west coast of Italy was the constant rival of Venice, with Venice finally superior.

80. — **Frankfort**. A great fair was held twice a year in Frankford-on-Main, and Coryat speaks in praise of the jeweler's stock there. (Pooler.)

81. — **curse . . . upon our nation**. Duty to parents, as enjoined in the Fifth Commandment, was emphasized in the religion of the Hebrew. As a blessing was attached to its fulfilment, personally and nationally, so a tremendous curse would follow the violation of it.

83. — **precious, precious jewels**. The desire of the Jew for portable property and the reluctance of the Christian to have him acquire them (see I, iii, 26 *n*) adds point to this lament.

85. — **hearsed**. In her coffin.

122. — **merchandise**. Trade: "I can do business as I please." The usurer in Shylock has the last word after his desire for revenge for injured affections.

Scene II

Scene II. In this scene the wooing of the Lady of Belmont is accomplished.

1. — **I pray you tarry**. This opening speech of Portia's shows where her heart is and forecasts the happy outcome.

2. — **in choosing wrong**. In the event of your choosing wrong.

6. — **quality**. Manner.

9. — **some**. See II, iv, 26 *n*.

14. — **Beshrew**. Though this imprecation is playful, yet it has a little more significance than in II, vi, 51.

15. — **o'erlooked**. Gazed upon me with the evil eye.

16. — **the other.** Scan as one word.

18. — **naughty times.** Evil days. "Naughty" conveyed a deeper sense of guilt in El. E. than it does to-day.

21. — **I.** Used for "me," as the word stands quasi-independently.

22. — **peize the time.** Put a weight upon it to hinder its flight.

23. — **eke.** A form of "eche" (pron. to rhyme with speech), meaning to increase, draw out.

25. — **rack.** An instrument of torture which pulled out the joints of its victims. It was often employed to extract confession from those accused of treason.

44. — **swan-like end.** The belief that the swan sings melodiously at the time of its death is very ancient. Plato records a saying of Socrates: "When they perceive that they must die, having sung all their life long, [they] do then sing more than ever, rejoicing in the thought that they are about to go away to the god [Apollo] whose ministers they are." (*Phædo*, tr. Jowett.)

49. — **flourish.** At the coronation of an English sovereign he was shown to the people for their obeisance, trumpets sounding. (Var.)

54, 55. — **with much more love, Than young Alcides.** Alcides is one of the names for Hercules. The story referred to is one of the incidents of the sixth labor of Hercules. On his return from acquiring the girdle of Hippolyta (Pron. *hip-pol'y-tah*) he slew a sea monster to which the Trojans had from time to time been forced to sacrifice a maiden. As he demanded a substantial reward for his services, Bassanio exceeds him in love. This is another of the many passages in this play in which there is reference to a story found in Golding's *Ovid*, XI, 237-241.

58. — **Dardanian.** Poetical for Trojan: derived from Dardanus (Pron. *dar'dan-us*), the fabled ancestor of the royal house of Troy.

59. — **blearèd.** Disfigured with tears.

61. — **Live thou, I live.** The subjunctive, which here is used conditionally and has the same inflection as the indicative, is indicated by placing the verb before the subject. (Abbott, § 361.)

63. — **fancy.** Inclination to love, a common sense in El. E. Discussions as to the origin and derivation of love were eter-

nally popular with professional amorists of the school of Petrarch.

79. — **approve.** Corroborate.

81. — **simple.** Without any redeeming quality.

— **but.** “But” often expels [the subjunctive from the following relative clause. (Abbott, § 123.)

84. — **stairs of sand.** The allusion may be to the shelving and treacherous sides of an excavation in a sand bank.

85. — **Hercules . . . Mars.** Typical heroes, strong and valiant.

86. — **searched.** A surgical term equivalent to “probed.”

87. — **valour's excrement.** The beards mentioned two lines above. Excrement means any outgrowth, as hair and nails. Cf. *Love's Labour's Lost*, V, i, 109.

92. — **crispèd.** Curled.

96. — “Being” is to be understood between “them” and “in.” (Abbott, § 381.)

97. — **guilèd.** Treacherous.

99. — **Indian.** Standards of beauty differ, and the type admired by East Indians would be a shock to a European expecting his standard of beauty when the veil was raised.

102. — **Hard food for Midas.** Midas was a king of Phrygia who asked and obtained from the gods the power of turning everything he touched into gold. “Whether his hand did touch the bread, the bread was massy gold.” (Golding's *Ovid*, XI, 34.)

104. — **meagre.** Poor, barren.

109. — **As.** “Such” is frequently omitted before “as.” (Abbott, § 113.)

112. — **rain.** Rein.

115. — **counterfeit.** Portrait.

124. — **having.** In order to scan this line the *-v* must be softened so that the word has practically one syllable. (Abbott, § 466.)

126. — **unfurnished.** Unprovided with a companion.

— **how far.** As far. (Abbott, § 46.)

130. — **continent.** Container. Cf. *Hamlet*, IV, iv, 64.

141. — **prize.** A match for prizes.

156. — **livings.** Estates, possessions.

169. — **even now, but now.** Just at this moment. The time indicated differs from that expressed by “even now” in I, i, 34.

174. — **vantage.** Opportunity.

— **exclaim on.** Blame.

178. — **spoke.** See II, iv, 5 *n.*

191. — **from.** Gratiano's congratulations are vague; he probably means that he is safe in leaving Bassanio to conceive his own good wishes, as he certainly could wish nothing that could injure his faithful follower.

198. — **mistress . . . maid.** The relation indicated is not what would be understood by the words to-day. Nerissa is a "waiting-gentlewoman," in much the same relation to Portia as a "maid-of-honor" to a queen.

199. — **intermission.** Delay. Gratiano is perfectly frank about his wooing as an understudy to his master's.

203. — **sweat.** Past participle in *-ed* omitted. (Abbott, §341.)

204. — **roof.** Roof of the mouth.

209. — **so.** Used with the subjunctive to mean "provided that." (Abbott, § 133.)

216. — **if that.** "That" has the force of a conjunctional affix here. (Abbott, § 287.)

218. — **very.** True, real.

220. — **entirely.** Heartily.

227. — **commends.** Recommends himself to kindly remembrance.

231. — **estate.** State, condition.

234. — **royal merchant.** Merchant prince: the great merchants of the Renaissance were the friends and benefactors of princes.

236. — **Jasons.** See I, i, 170, 171 *n.*

238. — **shrewd.** Of evil import. In its oldest sense the word means accursed. *Cf.* II, vi, 51; III, ii, 14.

241. — **constitution.** Frame of body or mind.

242. — **constant.** Steady.

246. — **unpleasant'st.** This seems a very mild way of putting it, but the euphemistic contraction is not uncommon in Shakespeare.

257. — **mere.** Absolute.

267. — **should.** See I, ii, 90 *n.*

272. — **at morning . . . at night.** The first phrase has an archaic, the second a familiar sound to modern ears.

273. — **impeach.** Call in question.

275. — **magnificoes.** Magnifico is an honorary descriptive title bestowed upon the magnates of Venice. (N. E. D.)

288. — **unwearied.** Borrows a superlative force from “best.” (Abbott, § 398.)

297. — This line may be scanned by pronouncing “through” as “thorough.”

307. — **cheer.** Countenance.

308. — **dear bought.** Bassanio was an expensive luxury all around; Antonio had put his life into jeopardy on his account and Portia had known much strain while in suspense as to his choice. Portia shows most generous affection in taking up a new burden just as her own trouble seemed ended.

313, 314. — **between you and I.** A regular El. idiom. The sound of *-d* and *-t* before *me* was avoided. (Abbott, § 205.)

Scene III

Scene III. This scene, by exhibiting Shylock's cold implacable vengefulness, prepares the way for the Trial Scene. It brings out clearly that Shylock considers all kindness and mercy in money matters as the sheerest folly.

2. — **gratis.** A Latin adverb meaning “freely.”

9. — **naughty.** See III, ii, 18 n.

— **so fond.** So foolish. Understand “as” after the phrase.

15. — **the head.** Here, as in French, the article is used for the possessive adjective. (Abbott, § 92.)

19. — **kept.** Dwelt; a common meaning in El. E.

21–24. — Here we have the bottom reason for Shylock's conduct. Antonio says no more than Shylock himself said in III, i, 50 ff. Race feeling and the loss of his daughter have been but fuel to a long smouldering fire.

27. — **commodity.** Here convenience, advantage.

— **that strangers have.** “Al men, specially strangers, have so much libertie, there, that though they speake very ill by the Venetians, so they attempt nothings in effect against theyr estate, no man shal control them for it. . . . And generally of all other thynges, so thou offende no man privately, no man shal offende thee: whyche undoubtedly is one principal cause, that draweth so many straungers thither.” W. Thomas, *History of Italie* (1561, Clarendon ed.).

30. — **trade and profit, etc.** The reason Antonio gives for Venetian justice seems to be simply literal, not cynical. It is the true mercantile point of view.

32. — **'bated.** Reduced, a-bated my weight.

Scene IV

Scene IV. In this quiet scene we have the climax of the play — the first indication of the solution of the entanglement. We have here the inception of Portia's scheme, her communication with Dr. Bellario of Padua, and her arrangements for leaving Belmont.

2. — **conceit.** Conception.

3. — **amity.** From very early times friendship has been appreciated and regarded not only as one of the great human relations, but as one which might very well cause others to be forgotten, — “passing the love of women.” David and Jonathan, Orestes and Pylades, Damon and Pythias, Amis and Amiloun — all were famous examples of this virtue, and Spenser devoted the Fourth Book of the *Faerie Queene* to friendship and its variations. Damon and Pythias figured in the early English drama. So an Elizabethan audience was well prepared to second Lorenzo's opinion that Portia was displaying only proper appreciation of the semi-divine friendship between Antonio and Bassanio in her willingness to be parted from her bridegroom.

9. — **customary bounty.** Ordinary generosity.

12. — **waste.** Here merely “spend.”

14. — **proportion.** Configuration, form.

20. — **semblance of my soul.** Antonio. Her identification with Bassanio is complete.

21. — **From out.** In Mod. E. this phrase is replaced by “out of.” (Abbott, § 157.)

30. — **her husband and my lord's.** A compound phrase connected by a conjunction is regarded as a whole for which one inflexion may serve. (Abbott, § 397.)

31. — **monastery.** Some three miles distant from the right bank of the Brenta, between Fusina and Padua, there was really a Benedictine convent. (Th. Elze.)

33. — **imposition.** Injunction: the word carries none of our modern sense of “imposing upon.”

45. — **honest-true.** Two adjectives combined, the first used adverbially to qualify the second. (Abbott, § 2.)

48. — **Padua.** A city lying on a small tributary of the river Brenta by means of which it is in water communication with Venice. It is the seat of a famous university.

“Many Venetians, after going through an ample course

of instruction at home, would be sent to Padua to complete their education, which was intended to serve them in civic offices or in embassies abroad. . . . Paduan professors of law were known not merely in Italy, but throughout Europe, and saw their works printed both in France and in Germany." (Molmenti, II, i, 258 ff.)

49. — **cousin's**. "Cousin" covers kinship of any degree.

51. — **imagined**. Imaginable. (Abbott, § 375.)

52. — **traject . . . common ferry**. The Venetian word for ferry is *traghetto* (Pron. *trahg-el'to*.) For the ordinary Venetian, too busy for pleasuring, the ferries are the most important part of the water life of the city. These ferries cross the Grand Canal at fixed points and also run from the Rialto to places on the mainland. That from the Rialto to Padua was one of the earliest established and dates from the fourteenth century. (Molmenti, I, i, 30.)

59. — **habit**. This includes both garb and bearing.

60. — **accomplished**. Perfectly furnished.

62. — **accoutred**. Equipped.

— **like young men**. See II, iv, 32 n.

66. — **reed voice**. A thin squeaking voice, like that produced by the reed or vibrating tongue in a musical instrument.

68. — **quaint**. Ingenious, elaborate. Obsolete in this sense. (N. E. D.)

71. — **I could not do withal**. I could not help it.

76. — **Jacks**. "Jack" as diminutive of John is a nickname-of-all-work in English. Cf. Jackanapes, Jack-in-office, etc.

80, 81. — **coach . . . park gate**. As has already been said (I, ii, Setting), Shakespeare probably thought of Belmont as one of the villas on the river Brenta. It would then have not only communication by water with both Padua and Venice (II, viii, I; III, iv, 52) but would have access, at the rear of the grounds, to the highway between Padua and Fusina, as is implied in this passage and perhaps also in III, ii, 223.

Scene V

Scene V. As the last scene furnished the first hint of the solution of the tragic entanglement, so this one prophesies the peace and peacefulness of the last act at Belmont.

3. — **fear you.** Fear for you.

4. — **my agitation.** Result of my thinking.

15, 16. — **Scylla . . . Charybdis.** The classical version of "frying-pan . . . fire." Scylla, the dangerous rock, and Charybdis, the whirlpool, are personifications of the double dangers of mariners. He who avoids the rock may be swept away by the whirlpool. Roman writers localized them in the Straits of Messina between Italy and Sicily.

18. — **saved by my husband.** A wife was supposed to take over the religion as well as the citizenship of her husband, but Jessica can hardly be supposed already so familiar with the New Testament as to quote St. Paul. (I Cor. vii, 14.)

21. — **enow.** Pl. of "enough."

41. — **wit-snapper.** One who snatches at every opportunity for a joke.

43. — **cover.** A series of puns starts here. (See ll. 44, 49, 53.) "Cover" means either the covering of the table for a meal or the utensils laid out for use. It was also a custom to "cover" or replace the hat which had been removed while grace was said.

46. — **quarrelling with occasion.** Quibbling at every opportunity.

59. — **a many.** "A" was frequently inserted before a numeral adjective to indicate collective use. (Abbott, § 87.)

60. — **Garnished like him.** If the conjecture (p. 98) is accepted, and Launcelot is eager to show himself capable of filling the office of a professional jester, "garnished" here means not only mental equipment but motley dress. Lorenzo knows fools, better established in the profession, who cannot match Launcelot in verbal quibbles.

— **for a tricky word.** For the sake of a pun.

61. — **How cheer'st thou?** What cheer? This verb is used by Shakespeare only in this passage, but it is not uncommon in El. E.

68. — **mean . . . then.** This passage has challenged Shakespearian criticism. Capell's interpretation "to observe the mean," *i.e.* to enjoy blessings moderately, is plausible in view of the contemporary admiration for the "golden mean" of Aristotle. The Clarendon editors suggested that the passage is a misprint for "merit them," *i.e.* "heavenly

joys," which has at least the merit of a perfectly clear meaning.

73. — **pawned.** Staked.

80. — **howsome'er.** Howsoever.

81. — **set you forth.** Praise or commend you. (N. E. D.)

Act Fourth

Scene I

Scene I. This scene, the Trial Scene, is not only the great scene of the play but one of the greatest and most famous in all Shakespearian drama. The groups which have been presented to us in their separate lives and activities are here confronted and out of the resultant reactions grows the catastrophe, which it is to be noted falls in the Fourth Act, not as usually in the Fifth.

2. — **Ready.** The legal answer to a summons.

5. — **Uncapable.** Incapable. The use of *un-* and *in-* in El. E. is often the reverse of the modern. (Abbott, § 442.)

6. — **from.** This use of "from" instead of "of" has a modern illustration in "clear from," "free from."

— **dram.** Small quantity, very little.

7. — **qualify.** Moderate.

8. — **obdurate.** The metre indicates that in El. E. the accent was nearer the end of the word than with us. (Abbott, § 490.)

10. — **envy.** Malice.

13. — **tyranny.** Cruelty.

18. — **lead'st this fashion.** Keepest on with this pretence.

19. — **act.** Action.

20. — **remorse.** Simply pity without the modern sense of compunction.

— **strange.** Extreme, extraordinary.

22. — **where.** Whereas.

24. — **loose.** Release.

26. — **moiety.** A share, portion; generally, but not always, taken as half.

29. — **enow.** See III, v, 21 *n*.

— **royal merchant.** See III, ii, 234 *n*.

32. — **Turks and Tartars.** Ethnologically there is very little difference in the people referred to in the general use

of these two words. By transference both came to mean people with the barbarous characteristics commonly attributed to Turks and Tartars.

33. — **offices.** Duties.

35. — **possessed.** See I, iii, 62 *n.*

36. — **Sabbath.** The Jewish holy day, as differing from that of the Christian, is a sign of all that Hebraism stands for.

38. — **danger.** Damage.

39. — **your charter and your city's freedom.** The words here are associated with English practice, but the idea — the pride of Venice in her equal justice — is true to the history of the sea city. "Legal procedure was at all times marked by spotless honesty. . . . The calling of advocate was held in high esteem . . . in the course of civil suits judges were rigorously forbidden to receive visits from either of the parties to the cause, or recommendations from their friends. . . . Every Venetian, however noble, was obliged to bow down before the rigor of the law." Molmenti, II, i, pp. 30-41.

43. — **humor.** Here whim, caprice. For a discussion of the wide and varied use of this word in El. E. see *Julius Caesar*, II, i, 210 *n.*, Scribner English Classics.

46. — **baned.** Killed by poison.

47. — **gaping pig.** There has been discussion as to whether Shakespeare meant the squeals of a living one (Knight), or the lemon-filled jaws of the roast article (Malone). The present editor would suggest that the expression has an analogy in a "gaping wound" and that the reference here may mean a pig hung by the heels, its throat cut by the butcher; — a sight to shock the squeamish.

49. — **affection.** A mental state brought about by any influence. (N. E. D.) Shylock explains that a mental state capable of inducing passionate action may proceed from trifling physical influences.

57. — **lodged.** Settled.

— **certain.** Steadfast.

59. — **losing suit.** Shylock will lose money if he persists in exacting the pound of flesh.

61. — **current.** Unimpeded course.

67. — **question.** Talk, debate. Remember you are arguing with the Jew.

69. — **main flood.** High tide.

— **'bate.** See III, iii, 32 *n.*

72. — **mountain pines.** — This passage, as so many others in the play, has a close parallel in Golding's *Ovid*, XV, 677, 678. "Such noyse as Pynetrees make what time the heady eastern winde Doth whiz amongst them." (Steevens.)

74. — **fretten.** Fretted, an irregular formation used by Shakespeare only here.

79. — **conveniency.** Fitness.

84. — **draw.** Receive.

87. — **purchased slave.** Shylock's accusation was perfectly true. A contract for the purchase of slaves exists, dated 1588, nor is it known with certainty just when the traffic ceased in Venice. Black slaves frequently served as gondoliers. It is fair to say that they seem to have been at least as well treated as hired servants. See Molmenti, II, ii, p. 240.

89. — **parts.** Capacities.

101. — **Upon.** In accordance with.

120. — **sole . . . soul.** If a play on words seems out of place at such a tragic moment it must be remembered that it is perpetrated by Gratiano, of the "skipping spirit." (II, ii, 177 ff.) The implied suggestion of stage "business" has been utilized by all actors of Shylock. The Jew kneels that he may intently whet his knife on the sole of his shoe. Booth did not even raise his eyes at l. 124.

122. — **hangman's axe.** "Hangman" is here a general term for executioner.

125. — **inexecrable.** In Folio³ this is emended to "inexorable," which seems to meet the case better than the attempt to explain the word as "not to be sufficiently execrated."

126. — The force of this line is — "Let justice be accused that you have not already been executed for your crimes."

128. — **opinion with Pythagoras.** The doctrine, commonly called "metempsychosis," that at death the soul passes into another living creature — man, animal, or even plant. Pythagoras, a Greek philosopher of the sixth century B.C., was the first prominent teacher of this doctrine which has had a widespread acceptance and influence.

131. — **wolf hanged for human slaughter.** The trial and punishment of animals for various crimes seems to have been considered a regular legal proceeding on the continent of Europe some time after the date of this play. The practice was based on Exodus, xxi, 28. But Mr. Sydney Lee sus-

pects in this passage a punning allusion to the execution of Dr. Lopez, a Spanish Jew, under the accusation of high treason in 1594. See Introduction, p. xix.

132. — **fleet**. Pass swiftly.

136. — **rail the seal**, etc. An apposite version of "Hard words break no bones."

147. — **shall**. Conveys here the idea of necessity. (Abbott, § 315.)

149. — **visitation**. Visit.

153. — **opinion**. The "notes" of III, iv, 50.

161. — **what he writes**. This phrase is a redundant object, merely explanatory. (Abbott, § 414.)

167. — **thoroughly**. A form of "thoroughly" commonly used in El. E.

173. — **impugn**. Find fault with.

174. — **danger**. Power to harm.

176, 177. — **must . . . must**. It is true that in El. E. "must" did not always convey the idea of necessity which we associate with it (Abbott, § 314), and Portia probably means no more than a "recommendation to mercy." But Shylock takes her up with exactly our meaning of the word.

178. — **strained**. Forced, constrained; a direct rejoinder to Shylock's "compulsion" in the preceding line.

180. — **twice blest**. Some of the discussion as to the meaning of this phrase might have been saved if the Beatitude (Matt., v, 7) had been recalled. There the quality of mercy is shown as blest to both giver and receiver.

190, 191. — **earthly power . . . justice**. This sentiment was a commonplace expressed by many writers. (Var.)

194-196. — This distinct reference to the Lord's Prayer and the Christian doctrine of forgiveness to be measured by forgiveness of others need not have sounded strangely in Shylock's ear. Cf. "He showeth no mercy to a man which is like himself: and doth he ask forgiveness of his own sins?" Ecclesiasticus, xxviii, 4. (Apocrypha.)

197. — **mitigate**. Portia admits the legality of Shylock's cause, asking of him only voluntary mercy. Thus the mind of the audience is prepared for the stern measures dealt to Shylock in the end, for he rejects the plea and declares for the law (l. 200).

208. — **truth**. Honesty. Cf. *Much Ado About Nothing*, IV, i, 36; *King John*, IV, iii, 144.

209. — **wrest the law.** Misinterpret the law wilfully.

210. — Here we have one of the great and ever-recurring questions in morals.

212. — **there is no power.** Venice prided herself on the immutability of laws. "This noble city which like a pure virgin inviolably doth conserve her laws and customs." Painter, *Palace of Pleasure*. (Pooler.)

217. — **A Daniel come to judgment.** In the Apochryphal book of *Susannah* Daniel appears as a wise young judge who rescues Susannah from persecution disguised as justice.

236. — **stay . . . on.** Take my stand upon. § 342.

249. — **balance.** Though there is evidence of the El. use of the singular form to mean a pair of balances it is also true that there is often confusion in the plural of nouns ending in a sibilant. (Abbott, § 471.)

255. — **you do.** The obvious suggestion is to understand "you should do." But see Abbott (§ 370) for irregular sequence of tenses.

266. — **such misery.** The scansion of this line is difficult unless we suppose "a" to have dropped out between these words.

269. — **speak me fair.** Bear favorable witness of me.

271. — **love.** Lover. Cf. III, iv, 17.

275. — **with all my heart.** Shakespeare succeeds in making the play on words, which he could not resist, add to the pathos of this speech.

277. — **Which.** Where "so dear," etc., is implied in the antecedent the corresponding "which" may occur in the relative. (Abbott, § 266.)

289. — **Christian husbands.** To Shylock this belittling of the wife's claim in favor of a friend is abhorrent. Moreover, he recalls that his daughter has now such a husband and the old grievance is renewed.

290. — **Barrabas.** (Pron. *bar'rah-bas*.) This pronunciation is found also in Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*.

292. — **pursue.** Accent the first syllable. (Abbott, § 492.)

305. — **confiscate.** This verb, among others, did not add *-ed* in the participle, because they already resembled participles in their termination. (Abbott, § 342.)

312. — **the bond thrice.** This was Portia's offer (l. 228).

319. — **just.** Exact. (Abbott, § 14.)

321. — **substance.** The exact force of this passage, de-

pending on the sense of this word, has been much disputed. Taking it as "mass" (N. E. D.) the sense would be that the Jew is forfeit whether he makes a mistake so great as to affect the weight of the mass perceptibly, or whether it would take the balance of a hair to reveal it.

344. — **seek.** Subjunctive in a subordinate clause denoting purpose. (Abbott, § 368.)

345. — **contrive.** Plot.

348. — **in the mercy.** We still say "in the power."

361. — **shalt.** Future used for subjunctive; not uncommon in El. E. (Abbott, § 348.)

365. — **humbleness.** Submission, gentleness.

374. — **quit.** Remit. It is difficult to be sure just what settlement Antonio was suggesting. The explanation which seems most in accord with Antonio's generous spirit is that as the Duke has suggested that the state may be satisfied with a fine instead of half Shylock's property, so he will accept only in trust the half adjudged him. But, while it is clear enough that Lorenzo and Jessica will benefit ultimately, it is by no means clear whether Shylock or Antonio himself will be the immediate beneficiary. The Clarendon editors are sure that Antonio was asking nothing for himself; he could rely on Bassanio's gratitude, and besides Shakespeare knew that Antonio was soon to find himself a rich merchant once more.

376. — **use.** Trust.

380. — **presently.** At once; a more immediate sense than ours.

384. — **recant.** Retract.

395. — **of pardon.** In respect of pardon. (Abbott, § 174.)

399. — **gratify.** Reward substantially.

405. — **cope.** Match with an equivalent. This use is found only in Shakespeare and in this one passage.

419. — **gloves.** This request on the part of Portia is by no means as incidental as it seems to-day. Gloves were once rarer and more valuable articles than at present and had many symbolical usages. They were given as complimentary fees in law cases where the prisoner was pardoned after condemnation. A reversal of a sentence of outlawry was followed by a present of gloves to the judges whose word was to restore the culprit to home and citizenship. Sir Thomas More received gloves from a grateful suitor whose cause he

had favored, and these were accepted though the money accompanying them was declined. (S. W. Beck.) After having made the conventional request of gloves from Antonio, Portia could ask the eager Bassanio for something else.

420. — **ring.** Nash in the *Unfortunate Traveller* (ed. McKerrow, p. 260) tells a tale of a similar trick: rings obtained by deceit and used to excite jealousy, and lays the scene in Venice.

424. — **to give.** In giving. (Abbott, § 356.)

444. — **commandment.** Scan as a quadrisyllable: The *-e* before the last syllable was retained in pronunciation after it had been dropped in spelling. (Abbott, § 488.)

Scene II

Scene II. A brief scene, but necessary to link the Trial Scene to the last act. Portia must make sure of the Jew's property for Lorenzo and Jessica, so when Gratiano comes up with Bassanio's ring she requests him to direct her "clerk" to Shylock's house. Nerissa, of course, promptly avails herself of the chance to echo the ring episode.

6. — **advice.** Consideration, deliberation.

11. — **old.** "That Shylock was really old has been questioned. He is certainly called so by himself (II, v, 2) and by Portia (IV, i, 169). Antonio expects to outlive him (IV, i, 377)." (Pooler.)

15. — **old.** Intensive of great; *cf.* the colloquial use of "grand." It is still a dialect use in Warwickshire.

Act Fifth

This Fifth Act has sometimes been considered as a fault in the construction of the play, for the catastrophe is undoubtedly in Act IV. The plot, it has been said, ends with the solution of the Bond Story. To drop from the strain and relief of the Trial Scene to the light-hearted life of Belmont is an anticlimax, detracting from the dignity of the play. But the moral teaching of the play is that money can never outweigh love and faith and it is at Belmont that these rule. It would have been out of keeping with the whole conception of Portia to take leave of her in her doctor's gown with her identity still undiscovered. Our last impression of her is

to be that of the gracious lady and mistress, as capable of playful affection as of learned discussion.

Scene I

Setting. Garden before Portia's house. See I, ii, **Setting**.

1. — **In.** During. (Abbott, § 161.)

4. — **Troilus.** The first of a group of allusions to classical stories which were, of course, common property not only of renaissance but of mediæval literature. But it is of special interest to note that this particular group is to be found in Chaucer — the first in *Troilus and Criseyde*, one undoubted source of Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*, and the others in *The Legend of Good Women*. Actual verbal resemblance to Chaucer was here noted by Steevens: "Upon the wallis fast eke would he walke." (*Troilus and Criseyde*, V, 666.)

7. — **Thisbe.** The familiar story of Pyramus and Thisbe was used by Shakespeare in the burlesque performance in the Fifth Act of *Midsummer Night's Dream*. It is found not only in Chaucer but in Golding's *Ovid*, IV, and also in Gower's *Confessio Amantis*. "On the whole Gower's account is most like Shakespeare's." (Pooler.)

10. — **willow.** This is not classical, but an Elizabethan audience would readily understand the implication. Cf. *Othello*, IV, iii, 41 ff.; *Much Ado About Nothing*, II, i, 194 ff.

11. — **waft.** Beckoned. Verbs with an infinitive in -t often drop the -ed in the past indicative. (Abbott, § 341.)

13. — **Medea.** A famous sorceress of Colchis who restored youth to Æson, father of Jason, by her enchantments. The starlit setting thus runs in Ovid:

O golden starres whose light,
Doth jointly with the Moone succeed the beames that blaze by day.
Golding's *Ovid*, VII, 259, 260.

15. — **steal.** Dr. Furness inquires (Var.) whether Lorenzo might not have used a less suggestive word.

16. — **unthrift.** Unthrifty.

23. — **out-night.** Outdo you in mentioning starlit nights.

24. — **footing.** Footsteps.

28. — **Stephano.** By the time Shakespeare wrote the *Tempest* he knew that this name should be accented on the first syllable.

31. — **holy crosses.** The wayside shrines of Europe with their crosses attract the attention of every traveller.

39. — **Sola**, etc. The irrepressible and officious Launcelot rushes in imitating the postman's horn, degenerated in later days to a whistle.

49. — **expect.** Await.

51. — **signify.** Give notice.

53. — **music.** Venice was well known for its music, to which the peculiar softness of its physical and moral atmosphere was favorable. The Venetian painters "draw for us those companies of high born men and women met for music and for song, in the gilded chambers of their palaces, in the gardens and vineyards of the lagoon, in the parks and groves of their villas on the mainland." (Molmenti, II, ii, 29.)

56. — **In.** In El. E. "in" was used with verbs of motion as well as rest, and we still say "fall in love."

57. — **touches.** Motions of the hand fingering a musical instrument.

59. — **patines.** Thin plates of metal. This passage indicates a night so brilliant that stars hold their own even against bright moonlight.

61. — **motion . . . sings.** The doctrine of the "music of the spheres," originated by Pythagoras, had through Platonic teaching been so thoroughly incorporated into human thought and speech by Shakespeare's time that it is utter folly to talk about any particular "source" for this passage. Plato (*Republic*, Bk. X) tells of the whirling planetary spheres, one outside the other, which make up the universe. On the upper surface of each is a siren, going around with it and sounding the note peculiar to that sphere, the combination of notes making harmony. In mediæval discussion these sirens naturally became angels. Shakespeare understands the conception, originally concerned only with the planets as extending to the "smallest orb."

62. — **quiring.** Making music.

— **cherubins.** The Hebrew word *cherub* (pl. *cherubim*) indicates an angel of a particular rank in the heavenly hierarchy. The Fr. singular is *cherubin*.

65. — **close it in.** The "too, too solid flesh" so closely imprisons the soul that we can hear clearly neither its harmony nor that of the universe.

66. — **wake Diana.** See below, l. 109 n.

68. — **Draw her home with music.** As Orpheus drew all things. See below, l. 79.

72. — **race.** Herd.

77. — **mutual.** Common; a sense frequent in Shakespeare, though not now accepted as good usage.

79. — **poet.** While the story of Orpheus and the power of his music has been a favorite poetic theme, yet it is fair to assume that Shakespeare here means Ovid, who treated it in the *Metamorphoses*. To Golding's translation of this Shakespeare was often indebted, especially in this play.

81. — **stockish.** Like a stick, unfeeling.

83-88. — This much quoted passage has been taken most seriously as an authentic pronouncement on human psychology with fine disregard for the fact that it is uttered by Lorenzo, no philosopher at the best, who is in love, in moonshine, and in an Italian garden! Portia sounds the note of warning against glamour in l. 100. It is true, however, that Shakespeare held lack of musical appreciation against Cassius (*Julius Cæsar*, I, ii, 204). Recent history shows that even musical endowment so wide-spread as to be called national is not inconsistent with the quality indicated in l. 85!

85. — **spoils.** Rapine, spoliation.

87. — **Erebus.** In classical mythology the abode of utter darkness outside the earth.

90. — **little candle.** — See Matthew, v, 14-16.

91. — **naughty.** See III, ii, 18 *n*.

99. — **without respect.** Without consideration of circumstances. This is the sense according to N. E. D. But may not Portia have some notion of the familiarity which breeds contempt? She liked the music before she knew its connection with her own servants, and Nerissa evidently scorns the home-made product.

109. — **Endymion.** In classical mythology a shepherd of Elis loved by Diana, whose symbol is the moon. He slept in a cave on Mt. Latmos, where Diana visited him. This story is told by Ovid, *Heroides*, XVIII.

112. — **cuckoo.** The note of this bird is so peculiar that there can be no question of its identity.

121. — **tucket.** (It. *toccato*.) A flourish on a trumpet.

127. — **Antipodes.** The opposite side of the earth which, of course, is dark in our daytime. Bassanio's compliment is characteristically Elizabethan.

132. — **God sort all!** God's will be done: let God decide the fate or lot of all.

136. — **in all sense.** For every reason.

141. — **this breathing courtesy.** Talk's cheap.

146. — **posy.** A contraction of poesy, meaning the motto or jingle inscribed in a ring.

148. — **upon a knife.** Mottoes were engraved also upon knives. The missing accent in this line is supplied by the marked pause after the colon. (Abbott, § 508.)

154. — **respective.** Mindful, careful.

157. — **and if.** "And" or "an" were at one time used to introduce subjunctive clauses. Later "if" was added and gradually was used alone. (Abbott, §§ 102, 103.)

160. — **scrubbèd.** Stunted, A. S. *scrob*, a shrub. (Cf. Shropshire.)

162. — **prating.** Prattling.

167. — **riveted.** The final *-ed* is not sounded. (Abbott, § 472.)

173. — **too unkind.** The metre requires that only two syllables be made of these two words. (Abbott, § 462.)

174. — **Mad.** Insane, beside herself with wrath, a sense now colloquial, especially in the U. S., but formerly in good use.

195. — **virtue.** Power.

196. — **her worthiness.** As the genitive of "she" "her" may stand as the antecedent of a relative. (Abbott, § 218.)

197. — **contain.** Retain.

199. — **much.** Used as an adverb. (Abbott, § 51.)

202. — **ceremony.** A ritual accessory or sacred sign.

206. — **civil Doctor.** Doctor of Civil Law; the extreme respect accorded to the attainment of this degree in Venice gives point to Bassanio's contention that he could not very well refuse the request for the ring.

216. — **candles of the night.** A common metaphor. Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, III, v, 9; *Macbeth*, II, i, 5.

237. — **wealth.** A general sense of prosperity.

240. — **My soul upon the forfeit.** A far more valuable pledge than that recalled in l. 237, merely his body.

265. — **life and living.** One necessary to the other. Cf. Shylock's complaint (IV, i, 369, 370).

276. — **Of.** Used with verb of fulness. (Abbott, § 171.)

APPENDIX

SHAKESPEARE'S WORKS CHRONOLOGICALLY ARRANGED

The date of composition of Shakespeare's works cannot be absolutely determined, but dates that are approximately correct have been assigned for all his plays. The evidence by which the time of composition is established is:—(1) Evidence external to the play, such as the entry for printing in the Stationers' Register, the date on the title-page of the earliest known edition, references to the play in other works of known date; (2) evidence both external and internal, such as references in the play to things contemporary of known date or sources used; (3) evidence internal, such as the character of the dramatic art and peculiarities of style. Under stylistic peculiarities is included the developing freedom Shakespeare shows throughout the progress of his work in his metrical expression. He moves gradually away from the frequent rimed lines of his early plays to an almost pure blank verse in his later ones. He moves gradually away from the monotony of lines regularly ending with a pause ("end-stopped" lines) to a freer rhythmic movement in which the rhythm runs on into the following line ("run-on" lines). In consequence of this freer metrical movement, the lines that in early plays end usually with words that have a heavy stress of the voice gradually change to lines which often end with words of little or no stress. The formal line of the English drama, the iambic pentameter (a five-accent line, the pattern foot of which is x'), is more and more varied by the addition of unaccented (x) syllables, especially at the cæsure and at the end of the line.

From such evidence, the chronological order of the plays is determined. The following is the order assigned them by Dowden, *Shakspeare*, pp. 56 *f*. Other scholars differ slightly in regard to the order and date here presented:

Comedies	Histories	Tragedies
<p><i>Love's Labor's Lost</i>, 1590 <i>Comedy of Errors</i>, 1591 <i>Two Gentlemen of Verona</i>, 1592-93 <i>Midsummer-Night's Dream</i>, 1593-94 <i>Merchant of Venice</i>, 1596 <i>Taming of the Shrew</i>, ? 1597 <i>Merry Wives of Windsor</i>, ? 1598 <i>Much Ado about Nothing</i>, 1598 <i>As You Like It</i>, 1599 <i>Twelfth Night</i>, 1600-01 <i>All's Well that Ends Well</i>, ? 1601-02 <i>Measure for Measure</i>, 1603</p>	<p>1. <i>Henry VI</i>, 1590-91 2. <i>Henry VI</i>, 1591-92 3. <i>Henry VI</i>, 1591-92 <i>Richard III</i>, 1593 <i>Richard II</i>, 1594 <i>King John</i>, 1596 1. <i>Henry IV</i>, 1597-98 2. <i>Henry IV</i>, 1597-98 <i>Henry V</i>, 1599</p>	<p><i>Titus Andronicus</i>, 1588-90</p>
<p><i>Troilus and Cressida</i> [1603]. Revised ? 1607 <i>Pericles</i>, 1608 <i>Cymbeline</i>, 1609 <i>Tempest</i>, 1610 <i>Winter's Tale</i>, 1610-11</p>	<p><i>Henry VIII</i>, 1612-13</p>	<p><i>Romeo and Juliet</i> [1591]. Revised 1596-97</p> <p><i>Julius Cæsar</i>, 1601</p> <p><i>Hamlet</i>, 1602</p> <p><i>Othello</i>, 1604 <i>King Lear</i>, 1605 <i>Macbeth</i>, 1606 <i>Antony and Cleopatra</i>, 1607 <i>Coriolanus</i>, 1608 <i>Timon of Athens</i>, 1607-08</p>

Shakespeare's poems are: *Venus and Adonis* (? 1592), published 1593; *The Rape of Lucrece* (? 1593-94), published 1594; *Sonnets* (? 1595-1605), published 1609.

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